



TRENDS

THE JOURNAL OF THE TEXAS ART EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

2013



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THE HOW NEEDS A WHY

Do you ever get lost in the process of art making? In your educational setting, do you mainly focus students on mastering the intricate details of the techniques along with its media? Because we can find the processes and media of art easily within our current state guidelines, we sometimes overlook the more subtle concepts of art that are buried there. We are focused on making sure we cover those obvious details and have forgotten the reason we are taking the journey in the first place--much less guiding our students on the journey with us. If we examine our own love for creating art, we will discover that it really isn't just the process or medium that we love, but the love for the creating itself. This is the difficult aspect of teaching art - imparting to students the love for creating. We can teach a process all day long, but if we don't instill that ability to create and love for creating, we have reduced ourselves to being more like math teachers. This is the math teacher who teaches the formula without why the formula works; thus making the students unable to apply their learning in new situations much less enjoy the process. If we solely focus on the "how," we are merely making trained, functioning monkeys rather than broad-minded, critical thinking adults. We have the life experience of loving the creative process so we are responsible for imparting that love to the next generation. Along with this, we must connect to other educators in other content areas as an example of what true learning is all about. I'm out there with you making sure my how has a why - taking the time to help students understand the foundational creative concept behind art making. I appreciate and applaud the TAEA Executive Board and all the various art educators I have had the privilege to work with over the years for their understanding and practice of emphasizing the "why," and I invite you to join in the adventure!

Linda Fleetwood
President, TAEA



Linda Fleetwood is an art teacher and the Fine Arts Chair at John Marshall High School, Northside ISD, in San Antonio, TX. She has been an educator for 22 years, is a joyous wife and mother of three daughters, and is blessed with six grandchildren. She has been the Region 20 VASE Director for ten years, is the State VASE Jury Foreman, and is the author and administrator of the VASE Online Juror Certification Program. She is an unapologetic colorist and can be found slapping pastels over wet fabrics or paper when she is not inspiring her students to achieve their very best. She joyfully serves the Texas Art Education Association as President and sees her role as that of a team member. She loves to make a difference.

TOP LEFT Linda and my student Gloria in my Marshall HS AP Art classroom, fall 2012
TOP RIGHT Linda and JMHS Dance Team at a Marshall HS football game, October 2012
BOTTOM LEFT Linda welcoming the delegates at the NAEA Delegates Assembly, March 2013
BOTTOM RIGHT Linda at the TAEA Conference in San Antonio, November 2012

2014 CALL FOR MANUSCRIPTS

Trends, The Journal of the Texas Art Education Association

theme: connecting art education and new media/technology

society is on *the* move

With global connections and advances in new media and technology people are moving at an even faster pace than ever before. Art teachers, professors, administrators, policy makers, entrepreneurs, and therapists are working everyday to keep step with these advancements in their classrooms, offices, and communities. In this issue of Trends, The Journal of the Texas Art Education Association the editors seek articles that reflect the numerous ways that the field of art education is connecting with, facilitating, learning, exploring, teaching, and understanding new media and technology.

This issue of Trends encourages authors to submit articles that connect art education classroom practice, research, policy-making, administration, and community engagement to new media and technology. Authors are invited to submit articles that discuss and explore diverse perspectives with both positive connections and those quandaries that exist when interacting with new forms of media and technology.

Trends invites art educators, community-based activists, museum educators, university educators, researchers, and graduate students to submit articles for possible publication.

Trends, The Journal of the Texas Art Education Association is a refereed professional journal published annually by the TAEA and is sent to all members and to selected state and national officials. The journal accepts articles written by authors residing outside of the state of Texas.

Deadline: Original manuscripts must be received by January 1, 2014 as MS Word document attachments, electronically via e-mail to Amanda Alexander at amandaa@uta.edu. To facilitate the anonymous peer review-process, author's name and any identifying information should appear on a separate page. Manuscripts must be formatted according to APA (6th Edition) standards. Photographic images are encouraged; please prepare them in digital (300 dpi.jpg) format and include the photo and/or copyright release form.

For questions or more information, please feel free to contact Amanda Alexander or refer to the Trends homepage (<http://www.taee.org/taee/Docs/2014/2014-Trends-Call-Manuscripts.pdf>).

Co-Editors:

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THE REVIEW BOARD FOR 2013 TRENDS,
THE JOURNAL OF THE
TEXAS ART EDUCATION ASSOCIATION



JONI BOYD ACUFF

Joni Boyd Acuff is an Assistant Professor of Art Education at Ohio State University. Acuff's research agenda is centered on multicultural art education, community-based art education, and curriculum development. Acuff has over 11 years of art teaching experience in both traditional and non-traditional classrooms. She has worked extensively with a diverse population of learners, including students with special needs, student who identify as LGBTQ and students from varying racial backgrounds and socioeconomic levels.



AMANDA BATSON

Amanda Batson completed her MA in Art Education at The University of Texas at Austin where she began her work with the international non-profit, Let Art Talk. She serves on the NAEA Student Chapter presidential team, and is The Program Coordinator for the Center for Creative Connections at the Dallas Museum of Art.



LAURA EVANS

Laura Evans is an Assistant Professor of Art History and Art Education and the Director of the Art Museum Education Certificate at the University of North Texas. Evans received her PhD at The Ohio State University in Art Education, a Master's in Museum Studies at the University of Toronto, and a Bachelor's in Art History at Denison University. Previous to her PhD, Evans was on a year-long fellowship at the National Gallery of Art in the Department of Education. Her research interests are in the intersections between art museum education, gender, and empowerment, using narrative and auto-ethnography to explore these ideas.



ALEX FREEMAN

Alex Freeman is a researcher, writer, and presenter for the New Media Consortium in Austin, Texas -- he directs the Marcus Institute for Digital Education in the Arts (MIDEA), contributes to the Horizon Report series, and works on other projects for HP and National Geographic. Freeman received his MA in Art Education from the University of Texas at Austin.



BETSY MURPHY

Betsy Murphy teaches art at Cedar Park High School in suburban Austin. She previously taught art at the elementary and middle school levels. She maintains her own studio practice and exhibits mixed-media encaustic works regularly. Betsy received her BFA from The University of Texas at Austin and her MAE from Texas Tech University. She serves as High School Division Chair-elect for the Texas Art Education Association.



REBECCA SCHAEFER

Becca Schaefer is an elementary art educator at Rasor Elementary School in Plano, Texas. She received her Bachelor's in Visual Art Studies from The University of North Texas in 2009. Since graduating she has participated in her local art education association, the Plano Art Leaders, as Co-President and was recently elected as the TAEA Elementary Division Chair Elect.

2013 TRENDS, THE JOURNAL OF THE TEXAS ART EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

LEARNING CONNECTIONS: MAKING MEANING THROUGH ART EXPLORATIONS

How are educators facilitating learning connections through art explorations that are meaningful and relevant to individuals coming from diverse social and cultural backgrounds? In this issue of *Trends*, a broad range of educational initiatives and insights from people in Texas and beyond are explored with the purpose of re-thinking art education practices in and out of the classroom.

Christine Miller considers the educational impact of utilizing technology to engage high school students with contemporary art issues and ideas in *Artist of the Day Videos: Technology for Student Engagement*.

Karin Tollefson-Hall and Bryna Bobrick discuss *Survey Results of Elementary Art Instruction in the United States* that illustrates common threads of concern that face art educators and consider the implications of such knowledge.

Kim Bishop reflects on her insights and experiences as both an artist and art educator to realize a large-scale community art project with her high school students and fellow artists in *The Texas Size Print Project*.

Kimberly Johnson Rutledge shares her first-hand experiences as a Native American woman who has tried to raise awareness about stereotyping and offers recommendations to art educators to break the cycle in her article *Portraying Native Americans: A Long Road to Ditching Stereotypes*.

Shoshanna Siton highlights interviews she conducted with artists in Israel who made the transition from professional artists to art educators in *How Should We Teach? A Discourse among Teachers and Artists on Teaching*.

Elizabeth Sutton's article *Blogging Connections* describes how using online social interactions can promote more first-hand exchanges between participants when studying the culture of others.

Paul Bolin and Kaela Hoskings explore the connections between historical and contemporary art practice in *We Do What We Believe: A Contemporary and Historical Look at Personal and Programmatic Purposes of Art Education*.

This year, we are happy to bring back two traditions to *Trends* which began in 2012. In our profile section, we asked division leaders from within our Texas Art Education Association to select one exemplary educator from their local area to share what they are doing to make art education experiences meaningful in their own particular teaching and learning context. Another tradition that we are so honored and privileged to share with you is our national discourse article. We invite a leading scholar in art education, to share with our readers, issues and ideas that are being discussed at the national level. Last year we invited Paul Bolin from The University of Texas at Austin to speak on material culture studies and this year we invited Juan Carlos Castro from Concordia University in Montréal, Québec to speak on *Teaching Art in a Networked World*. We are so delighted that these highly distinguished art educators have chosen to be a part of this publication and expand discourse in our field.

A new section that we are including in this issue is called *Voices of Artists: Listening to Stories of Experience*. Each editor selected an artist from their local community in Texas to interview and find out about how art has impacted their lives, and how this transformation occurred. The three artists featured include **Gary Sweeney, Stephen Lapthisophon, and Margo Sawyer**. We hope you will find the *Voices of the Artists* material helpful, inspirational, and worth sharing with your student population.

We hope you thoroughly enjoy this issue, as we have enjoyed working with all the authors.

ABOUT THE EDITORS



AMANDA ALEXANDER

Amanda Alexander is an Assistant Professor of Art Education at the University of Texas at Arlington and was an instructor of art education courses at the Ohio State University from 2007-2010. Additionally, she has taught at Edinboro University of Pennsylvania and with Upward Bound, a program dedicated to preparing inner city high school kids for college. She completed her doctoral work at OSU and also served in the Peace Corps. She can be reached at amandaa@uta.edu



CHRISTINA BAIN

Christina Bain is an Associate Professor of Art Education at The University of Texas at Austin. She has taught art and art education at the elementary, secondary, and college level. Her research interests include preservice art education preparation and the scholarship of teaching and learning. She received a Ph.D. in Art Education from the University of Georgia, M.S. in Art Education and B.F.A. in History of Art from Syracuse University. She can be reached at chrisbain@austin.utexas.edu



MARIA LEAKE

Maria Leake is an online Adjunct Lecturer at the University of Nebraska at Kearney, and a Texas public school art educator with twenty-two years of classroom experience. She completed her doctoral work at the University of North Texas and her research interests include contemporary art, community partnerships, material culture studies, and interdisciplinary learning. She can be reached at clintmaria@sbcglobal.net or leakemd@unk.edu



**2013 PROFILES:
EXEMPLARY
ART EDUCATORS
THROUGHOUT TEXAS**

TRENDS 2013 PROFILES OF EXEMPLARY ART EDUCATORS

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DIVISION: TRACY EVANS

INTRODUCTION

by Tamra Alami and Rebecca Schaefer

Tracy Evans is a fun and energetic elementary art educator in Plano, Texas. She began her career in Plano ISD as an art education substitute at a variety of schools before realizing teaching art was her passion and dedicated to take on her own classroom. As well as being a full time art educator at Mitchell Elementary, she is the Elementary Art Education

TRACY IN HER OWN WORDS

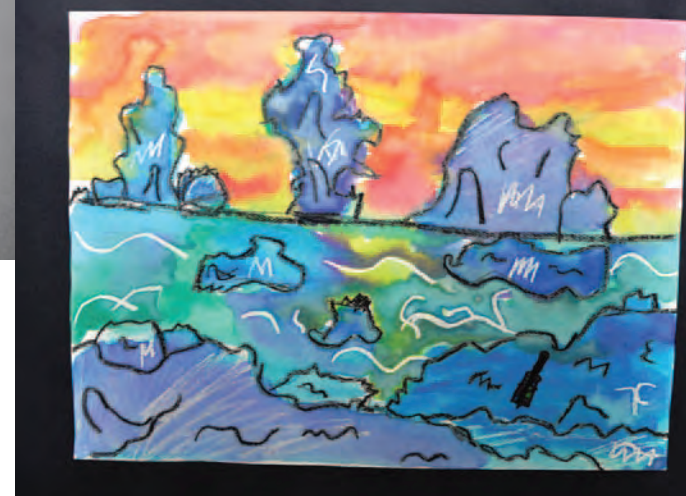
My name is Tracy Evans, and for the last seven years I have been the Art Specialist at Mitchell Elementary in Plano, Texas. I consider myself the luckiest art teacher because I get to teach 700 of the most creative, diverse, unique thinking kindergarten through fifth graders out there! They continue to make me excited to come to work every day! Our community at Mitchell continually changes and has morphed into this wonderful group of kiddos that not only love coming to art class, but they really love using their creative brains. This, as we know, develops an incredibly well-rounded and successful student. For the last five years, I have also been the Elementary Cluster Leader in Plano ISD. Learning and sharing with fellow art teachers in Plano is a great way to stay connected as many of us attend functions and workshops together. I've also loved being a part of Plano Art Leaders (PAL), and was an officer the past two years. I also taught art in the Plano ISD Summer Institute for Gifted and Talented Students (SIGS) program for three summers and have started my own home summer art camp called Evans Art House.

In the Mitchell Elementary art room, I try to create a "safe space," or a room where all ideas are welcomed and all children are valued. It's a safe place because when we discuss art and when we share our art, we express our creative selves with others. We let our opinions be known and allow our talents to shine. Most students love to contribute, some more than others, but sometimes speaking about their own ideas or showing their artwork can be challenging for fear of being ridiculed or picked on. However, if you set the stage and model that we are all unique and have our own way of creating and thinking, that you value their thoughts and opinions, students will see that a conversation doesn't have to end with an agreement. They start to learn that if you open yourself to others' ideas, you've opened up a whole new world! This philosophy carries into the classroom, the playground, and hopefully the home. In the last few years, I find times have changed a bit in our country, as far as manners and respect. We've started a program at Mitchell Elementary to help with just basic respect and responsibility skills, and it's helping in all areas of our school. Respect, responsibility, caring, and kindness are not just important in the art room, but it's helping to build a student population that will continue these skills into the community. Students can learn to listen and acknowledge someone else's opinion, artwork, writing, or music and be more tolerant of another's opinions.

Another way we create a safe creative space at Mitchell is to talk and strategize on how to not get upset when you make a "mistake." With the little ones I tell them that it's the art whispering in their ear--simply that the art wants to go somewhere else. Turn an "oops" into an "ah" by keeping a cool head. Of course, you can't think straight if you're mad or sad. Asking for help and doing your personal best is what is important. I see more students each year having trouble with handling adversity or when things do not go as planned. Many times, this is where I can see some real creativeness in how we are going to turn it around and make it a good day, or a great piece of art! Students as young as kindergarten remind their friends to "keep cool" or "take a deep breath," and they know there aren't any mistakes in art. "It's going to be ok." I just love it when I hear my words coming out of their mouths to help a friend!

This experience in the art room of valuing others' opinions and creativeness, even if they aren't in agreement, is going to stay with them the rest of their lives.

One of my favorite projects to teach is our second grade warm color/cool color iceberg watercolor paintings. I love this lesson because students



learn about the technique of watercolor painting, wax and water resist, and basic color theories of warm and cool colors. But students also learn how to write about their art. Of course we talk a lot about our art, but this is the first year we've started writing about our artwork. Students have stated how every artwork has a story, even if there are no words in the artwork. We discuss this a little bit of course when they are younger, but second grade is a great place to really dive into this concept and to start thinking critically, abstractly, and creatively. We use a very prestigious painting, Frederic Church's The Icebergs, as our starting point because they will get the opportunity to see this painting in person on their art field trip to the Dallas Museum of Art. This painting has a wonderful history behind it as well as an intriguing tale to go along with the art. The kids are hooked on day one! In the first photo, we are comparing Frederic Church's painting to another painting dealing with this same theme, but by a different artist. This will come in handy when they have to write their own story about their iceberg painting. Some have trouble starting their writing, but once they've got that main idea, we have had kids not want to stop and basically write a novel! We start with an unusual object in our painting, added at the last minute, and then a title. From there, we work on the who, what, when, where, why, and how through writing. The second grade teachers have heard me reinforce these writing skills in the classroom and say how wonderful that there is this connection and reinforcement between their content and ours. Perhaps this is an effective way to create a well-rounded student? In order for this writing and sharing of ideas and stories to be successful, you have to have that safe space where freely sharing

ideas, without fear of being ridiculed, can take place. The second photo is of a student writing their story and editing. The final step is to mount artwork and story together to make a great display!

I started teaching late in life, and if I had the chance to go back, I would start even sooner! Art is my passion. I hope I bring that passion to my students every day during the school year and during my summer art camps! This has been the most rewarding career of my life, and I love coming to school every single day! My friends from Plano ISD make my job as an art teacher amazing too. Tamra Alami and Rebecca Schaefer are incredible inspirations and are wonderful art leaders in our community. We have taught together in Plano for many years and have been on many art trips, trainings, conferences, and workshops together. I am so honored they have chosen me to feature and recognize; however, I feel all of us are inspiring a new generation of creative kids and molding incredibly creative, kinder, and more tolerant people for the future!

CLOSING THOUGHTS

Overall, Tracy Evans' ability to enhance art education inside the classroom and out has touched students' lives tremendously. Her ability to nurture the students' creativity and imagination gives them the necessary innovative problem solving skill needed to succeed in the future and become great leaders. Tracy shares her love of art with all her students as well as her colleagues. Her leadership within Plano ISD has not gone unnoticed and is greatly appreciated. Tracy's art instruction develops skills vital to all, and her efforts provide rich learning experiences for our Plano ISD students.



ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Tamra Alami teaches K-fifth grade elementary art classes at Haun Elementary and has served as the TAEA Elementary School Division Chair for the past two years. Co-Author Rebecca Schaefer is also a K-fifth grade elementary art teacher at Rasor Elementary and is the TAEA Elementary School Division Chair elect. These two creative art teachers can usually be spotted at every TAEA Conference teaching or attending as many classes as possible.



Vertical Team Leader for her district. In addition to these rolls, she has served as an officer for the Plano Art Leaders, her district's local art education association. Tracy exemplifies the type of hard work, dedication, and enthusiasm for the field of art education that each of us strives for!

MIDDLE SCHOOL DIVISION: CHRISTINE GRAFE

INTRODUCTION

by Lisa Miller

Being an art teacher can be a lonely job, especially if you are the only art teacher in your entire school district. Nearly fourteen years ago I started teaching art at a very small 1A school in the Brazos Valley. After my first year, I discovered a group located about an hour away called the Brazos Valley Art Education Association (BVAEA). The President of the group at the time was a lady named Christine Grafe.

The description of “lady” is very appropriate for Christine because she is one of the kindest and most gracious human beings I have ever met both inside and outside of the field of education. Christine served as President for the first three years of my membership in BVAEA and for an additional two years in 2007-09. The five years of her Presidency saw BVAEA improve as an organization and increase membership numbers. It is now known as a vibrant and productive group, and Christine is one of the reasons for this success.



challenged, but more importantly, are given the opportunity to challenge themselves. The art room should be a place where “wrong answers” and “mistakes” are celebrated for the opportunities for growth they provide. Most importantly, the art room should be a place where students are given the chance to think outside the box, to create something unique and personal, to problem solve, to collaborate, and even to occasionally fail without repercussions. When I watch my students thinking, engineering, building, struggling, collaborating, and creating, it makes me extremely grateful and proud to know that they are developing skills that will not only make them better learners but better prepared individuals for the challenges their future holds.

From very early on in my career, I have found paper mache to be an excellent medium for 3D construction and personal expression. One of my favorite lessons for sixth grade is based on the works of Claes Oldenburg in which students take a small common object and recreate it on a larger scale in paper mache. This lesson provides some exciting challenges for students. For one, I encourage them to work in groups and collaborate to create a finished piece. Next, students are forced to solve the problem of building their object from cardboard, poster board, newspaper, and masking tape. The final challenge comes in the finishing decoration and in trying to make the object look like the real thing. During this lesson, my classroom turns into a construction site (and often looks a bit like a war zone!), but the pride students take in their finished work makes all the mess worthwhile. These pieces really turn heads at the end of the year district art show,



CHRISTINE IN HER OWN WORDS

My name is Christine Grafe, and I am the fifth and sixth grade art teacher at Cypress Grove Intermediate School in College Station, TX. This is my 21st year with College Station ISD, and in addition to being the resident “Facilitator of Creative Expression,” I have served on various campus committees. I offer an after-school art club to fifty plus students each year. I have also been a member of the Brazos Valley Art Education Association for over 20 years and have served as secretary and president of that organization. Because of our proximity to Texas A&M University, our student body at Cypress Grove is wonderfully diverse and includes individuals from many nationalities and walks of life. While the current educational and economic environment can be particularly challenging for the fine arts educator, I believe that it is more important than ever to offer students opportunities that are unique to the art room and that will help prepare them for an ever changing future.

Today’s public education system is rife with challenges from the pressures of standardized testing, scheduling issues, and diminishing budgets. The environment in which children are learning today is vastly different from that of the past, and it continues to change at an exponential rate. New technologies are changing the landscape of our schools at a rapid pace, and I believe that fine arts education holds a vitally important part in helping our schools and our students adapt to these changes. The art room should be a place where students are



and several pieces are on permanent display in our school library.

As I look back on my career as an art educator, I am deeply aware of the ways in which this profession has changed my life for the better. My students continue to inspire me to see the world from their fresh perspective, to dream without reservations, and to live a life where creativity rules the day. I am also inspired by the many friends I’ve made over the years whose encouragement and support have kept me going in the darkest of times. Special thanks goes to my colleague and dear friend Lisa Miller who kindly selected me for this piece, and whose energy, enthusiasm, and generosity continue to inspire all who know her.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

One area in particular that has benefited art teachers in BVAEA, and the students lucky enough to have Christine as a teacher, are her abilities as an educator. She works with middle school students on a daily basis, which can be challenging, but she also does art projects that would be challenging at any age. She is known for her innovative lesson plans and workshops such as paper mache and glass fusion. In 2010, Christine began offering glass fusion classes for BVAEA members, which led to an interest in glass as a medium. Her expertise, creativity and enthusiasm with glass inspired the BVAEA Youth Art Month project glass fusion piece that was on display in November of 2012 at the Texas Art Education Association Conference. Christine worked with the BVAEA YAM committee members, Melissa Schulman and Erica Dodge, to develop the idea, and then took the work done by teachers and art students of the Brazos Valley to create an incredible piece of art that was seen throughout the local area. It was on display at the National Art Education Association Conference in Fort Worth in March of 2013.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Lisa L. Miller teaches secondary art at Bremond ISD. She served as President of the Brazos Valley Art Education Association from 2010-2012 and currently serves as the Middle School Division Chair-Elect for the Texas Art Education Association. In 2007 she received the George W. Bush Library and Museum’s “Outstanding Educator Award.” She has served as Director of Region 6 Junior VASE for two years, and in November of 2012, was named the TAEA Middle School/Junior High Art Educator of the Year. She lives on a farm outside of a town so small it only has one flashing light, and she maintains her studio, The Laughing Parrot, in a building that is over 100 years old.

INTRODUCTION
by Cindi Garrett

I have known of Charlotte for quite some time and had the opportunity to take a course with her in the AP Studio Art Summer Institute for Educators at Texas Christian University (TCU). I really fell for her type of teaching! Charlotte is extraordinary in her approach to art and her unique gift of working so well with students. Her casual yet passionate approach to the studio is refreshing. When she shares examples of her student projects, she shows us how she “pushes” her students’ ideas to reach new levels of achievement. Charlotte has what I refer to as an “infectious” yet subtle style that I admire. I can say that the time I spent engaged in professional development with Charlotte at TCU, was the most beneficial week of art education I’ve experienced. I encourage everybody to grab her wave of energy and knowledge!

CHARLOTTE IN HER OWN WORDS

My name is Charlotte Chambliss. This year I began teaching at the Episcopal School of Dallas, where I am currently teaching Foundations of Art, Studio Art II, and Studio Art III. I am enjoying the return to teaching where drawing and painting students are very receptive, eager, and appreciative. For the previous 22 years, I taught at Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing and Visual Arts, a magnet school that serves the diverse population of the Dallas Independent School District (DISD). Throughout the course of my time there, I taught many things. Originally hired as a drawing instructor, I also taught Design, Portfolio Presentation, Introduction to Art History, Introduction to Digital Video, AP 3-D, AP 2-D, and AP Art History. During my last year at the school, I worked with Nicole Stutzman of the Dallas Museum of Art to develop a collaborative class between juniors in the visual arts department and the museum. This has been a very exciting endeavor introducing students to the workings of the museum, artists working in the museum and community, and explorations into creativity.

For the past eleven years, I was a consultant for the College Board, teaching teachers throughout the United States and abroad, how to initiate, implement, and sustain classes in AP Studio Art and Art History, as well as serving as a mentor to fellow consultants. During this time, I was also a “reader” for the AP Studio Art exams and served many roles from reader, table reader, and my present position of Question Leader, working with readers in the selection of images that are used to represent the AP Studio Art program. I feel incredibly lucky. These opportunities, both in the classroom and beyond, have allowed me to work with and learn from some of the most incredibly talented and creative students, teachers, and colleagues. Every day is a professional development experience for me, as I learn something every day! I am an art education warrior! I passionately believe in the power of art!

I do not believe that art is something to be experienced by a select, elite group of students; rather, I believe that all students benefit from exposure to and participation in some form of art whether it’s music, theater, dance, or visual arts. I am often angered by the short-sightedness of educational funding cuts. I am also put off by fellow educators who treat art and art teachers with disdain, because after all, “it’s only art!” So it is my goal to be among the many who serve to challenge and shatter these misconceptions. With creativity at an all time low, due to many factors, an obvious benefit of the participation in the arts is that it provides students with a playground for experimentation and risk-taking, which is something sorely missing in many academic classrooms. I love to experiment in the classroom. Of course, it’s not easy to experiment all of the time in the foundations and lower level art courses, as there is so much skill-building taking place within so little time. Still, at intervals, I like to throw a curve ball at the kids, something to break up the pace of whatever they have been working on and something to breathe new life into the class. Artist trading cards and small visual journals have worked out great for my students of all age groups. I have adapted both of these types of assignments on occasion



and asked students to examine social issues as a subject. These too have yielded thoughtful responses. Another lesson that requires an individual response from everyone and has been hugely successful makes use of texts and images. Students are asked to recall a significant moment from his/her life. They then actually write a summary of the event on a prepared surface. Through different techniques and processes, the students either emphasize or de-emphasize the text, letting it serve as a background pattern and texture. The next phase is to isolate some area or areas within the piece and illustrate something that is either literally, metaphorically, or symbolically related to the narrative. Many students struggle with this assignment at first as it really forces them out of their “tight rendering” comfort zone. Yet somehow, through trial and error, almost everyone I have worked with comes out with a successful piece that is uniquely their own. I work individually with all of my upper level students to help them define and explore their personal interests, as well as different modes of expression.

I am proud to be an art educator. I have had the opportunity to do what I love and work with wonderful people, adults and students for many years. I am honored to have my profile included in the TAEA’s Trends Journal and grateful to Cindi Garrett for the acknowledgement. I met Cindi two years ago at an AP Summer Institute at TCU, where she was a participant. At the time, she was working with my co-presenter Barry Lucy at McKinney North High School. It was a very collaborative workshop with participants sharing the best of their practices in a very comfortable environment while making art. It was a wonderful experience.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

If there is someone you should work with to develop your dynamic studio specialist skills, it is Charlotte Chambliss. If there is someone you can emulate in your classroom to “infect” kids with successful art knowledge, it is Charlotte Chambliss. If you have a need for a professional development workshop for inspiration and renewed growth, it should be with Charlotte Chambliss.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Cindi Garrett is a 27 year veteran art educator. She lives in McKinney, Texas and teaches Digital Graphics and Integrated Art Media at McKinney Boyd High School. Her career accolades include Lubbock ISD 2003 Outstanding Secondary Educator, TAEA 2004 Outstanding Middle School Art Educator, Southwest Theatre and Film Association’s 2005 Outstanding Theatre Educator, and 2010 Reader’s Choice Best Teacher award in McKinney ISD. Cindi also serves as a course reviewer for The Texas Education Agency’s (TAEAs) Texas Virtual Schools Network. She prides herself in having worked with students of all ages in the public schools throughout her career in visual arts, theatre design, and digital media. Previously Cindi has served TAEA as the Area 2 representative for 20 years, the Middle School Division Chairman for two years, and the Awards Chairman for six years. Cindi currently serves as TAEA’s High School Division Chairman.

SUPERVISION DIVISION: MARY CANTU

INTRODUCTION

by Isabel Romero

I have known artist and educator Mary Cantu for over six years. When I look to hire someone to present a workshop for our teachers, I look for someone that understands not only sharing ideas that support the beauty of art to our students, but someone who understands the issues that go beyond teaching, such as budget cuts. When Mary launched Spare Parts in San Antonio, it brought with it creative ways to provide materials to supplant some of the budget cuts. Spare Parts offers free art and office supplies that are donated by many. Mary and her team also offer workshops on how to be creative in the classroom with minimal resources. The excitement our teachers find not only in receiving free supplies but sharing lessons has been inspirational.

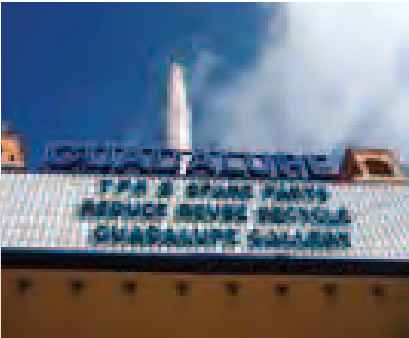
MARY IN HER OWN WORDS

I consider myself an art education advocate who is willing to take on various roles. For example, I teach a Friday night art history class at the International Academy of Design and Technology (IADT), work part time for San Antonio ISD's dyslexia department, and work with Spare Parts as a volunteer project. I feel that Spare Parts is important because teachers often spend their own money on supplies and materials for their classroom. Currently, Spare Parts is a 99% volunteer project but my goal is to transform this project into a full-time initiative where we collect and distribute "stuff" but also develop curriculum and provide learning opportunities for the community. Spare Parts' purpose is unprecedented in San Antonio as we promote creative re-use of materials to enhance art education opportunities.

My philosophy regarding art education is that art reflects identity, community, culture, history, the present, and future. Art should be taught in an environmentally conscious and sustainable studio-like atmosphere where students are able to experiment with a variety of media and have the resources to learn about other artworks, techniques, artists, and art movements. Education in this field should examine material culture critically, understand contexts in which art is realized, and allow students

to be creative and expressive within an encouraging yet challenging environment.

My approach to education is based on four philosophies, 1.) all students, when given a supportive environment, can succeed, 2.) learning is contextual, multidisciplinary, and connections across curricula should be honored, 3.) students should activate their learning from prior knowledge and past



experiences to make connections to new understandings, and 4.) the understanding that my learning is ongoing too. I

utilize this passion for education to continuously look for ways to improve my teaching methods and curriculum/ programmatic development.

When did I meet Isabel? Isabel Romero and I met 10 years ago through the San Antonio Arts and Education Task Force where advocates organized to strengthen arts education in our city. Since then, we have worked together in different capacities and through different projects all in the name of arts education. Most recently (thanks to Isabel), I presented the Spare Parts project along with creative reuse art techniques to TAEA's Supervision/ Administration Division at the 2012 conference.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

It seems that I am not the only one who thinks the world of Mary Cantu. When I attend in-services and I begin talking with people, Mary's name seems to come up again and again. People only have great things to say about her. Mary is recognized for her commitment to helping educators gain access to resources and ideas, which nurture a creative learning environment.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Isabel Romero is the Elementary Music and Secondary Choral Coordinator for the SAISD. She has over twenty five years of experience working in education.

HIGHER EDUCATION DIVISION: KARA KELLEY HALLMARK

INTRODUCTION

by Teri Evans-Palmer

I met Kara Hallmark for the first time several years ago and found her to be a person with whom I would want to be stranded on an island. She possesses an admirably buoyant disposition that enables her to overcome obstacles with indomitable spirit. She is perpetually optimistic, unsinkable (pardon the pun), and would find a way to get us off of the island and back in service to humankind in no time. Kara possesses courage to initiate action that transforms barriers into benefits, ultimately making a difference in the lives of many people. She raises the standard for art education to be a means to champion social reform. How does she achieve this? Permit me to let my esteemed colleague tell you in her own words.



KARA IN HER OWN WORDS

From the beginning of my journey with art education, postmodern theory has guided my path. One that promotes equity for artists, art students, indeed all people, despite gender, race, socio-economic status, and any other divisive qualities that create injustices against humanity. My particular focus as a graduate student centered on the issue of the position and power of women in the arts, including artists, administrators, and educators. Once I became an educator myself, I shifted to action-based research in the classroom with emphasis on service-learning and art as an interdisciplinary pedagogical framework to take action toward social justice. In the elementary setting, I quickly discovered that varied technological applications in art education an avenue to engage students in a new way, create diverse media opportunities for otherwise uninterested students, and broaden the scope and meaning of what we all think of as art.

As an art education Master's student, I became engaged in the Gender Studies program at the University of Central Florida (UCF) in Orlando. These studies supported a thesis that was centered on women artists who had worked in the collections of Florida's top contemporary museums. The results were essentially derived from a survey, a few informal interviews, and a quantitative study of each museum's contemporary collection without much of a backstory "behind the numbers." The findings were reported in a peer reviewed state journal. However, I felt somewhat let down by the lackluster experience. When my research was accepted for presentation at the state conference, I took the opportunity to present my charts and graphs in the spirit of activism inspired by the women artists who came before me, paving the way for change.

With their consent, I became a Guerrilla Girl in-training and recruited a few friends from my graduate program to help make my research a splash at the Florida Art Education Association Conference in 2000. They worked the conference with fervor leading up to my fifty-minute talk. Dressed in their homespun gorilla masks and warrior spirits, they walked the hallways of the conference, passing out dozens of bananas with the names of lesser-known women artists scrawled on the skin and fliers announcing the presentation. Fliers were also slipped under the doors of hotel rooms. Keeping with the tradition of the original activist group, a few of the "Guerrilla Girls" were chased out of the hallways by hotel staff for unapproved flier distribution!

During my time at UCF, I began to write artist encyclopedias with Dr. Kristin G. Congdon. As a feminist scholar herself, Dr. Congdon encouraged our careful review and selection of artists for each text to represent a diverse group of artists. A quieter activism, the inclusion of many unknown artists in these publications will shed a new light on the meaning of art and who can be called an artist. I found myself at Florida State University for my doctoral work. There, I underwent an ethnographic study with The Women's Studio Workshop in New York, a non-profit women's artist organization that has been in existence since the early 1970s. Being in an all-woman art space was different for me. The purpose of the research was to bring to the forefront the lives and experiences of women in the arts so that the canon begins to broaden and grow and indeed change.

When I became an elementary art teacher at the age of thirty-seven, I was finished with my education, but had never taught in the field. I had worked with young children in various settings but never the public school. I was in for the ride of my life. Once I caught my breath and actually started to know their names and had a handle on the basic requirements, all I could think about was how to get these students engaged with their communities; the community that was their school, their families, the city, the state, country, and eventually to understand the world around them. At the time that I completed my first service-learning project with my students, it was only upon reflection that I realized that was what we had done.

It was so simple. We picked up paper bags from the local grocery store called HEB. The students drew and colored on the bags with anti-drug messages to honor Red Ribbon Week. Each bag was given a label that identified the school and information about the anti-drug campaign. The bags were returned to the store and for many months after, the customers received bags with children's visual and written messages about the dangers of drug use. For many students, they began to realize that they too have a voice and that someone is listening. This kicked off many other service-learning projects while I taught at the school, including collaborations with many other teachers and administrators in the district.

I feel that another important initiative in art education is technology. How does technology and social justice work? I think that there are different viewpoints here to consider. The most important one for me is the ability to use technology to engage a greater number of students with the visual arts. As art educators, we already know that art can save a child in the public school system. Technology is another layer of art that can capture even more students who might otherwise "fall through the cracks." Whether technology is being used to make art, store art, or research and look at art, students are excited about it. Indeed, I

witnessed the transformation of attitude, engagement, and passion in the art room when technology was introduced. The most unruly fifth grader who only wanted to play basketball suddenly lit up when the cameras were passed out. The shyest bilingual student came in during recess to record her voice over and over until it was just right for the public service announcement to be aired on broadcast the next day. Third grade students who were reluctant to write in their journals couldn't wait to type their thoughts and dialog with other students about the new artist on the wiki that was shared with pre-service art teachers at The University of Texas at Austin. In the true vein of constructivism, I was learning right along side my students throughout most of these projects. We were truly constructing new knowledge together and it was exciting! Now, I strive to create experiences like this for my students in Higher Education as well as instill in them the drive to go out into the world and do this for their own students.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

Kara continues to lead the march for reform in spite of her own battle with cancer. She is Lecturer and Coordinator of Student Field Experiences at University of Texas at Austin and is currently serving as Central Texas Coordinator for One Million Bones, a service-learning art project to end global genocide as part of the national effort with artist, Naomi Natale. Dr. Hallmark is author of The Women's Studio Workshop: Inside an All-Woman Art Space.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Teri Evans-Palmer is Assistant Professor of Art Education at Texas State University-San Marcos. She has taught K-12 art in public schools and shares her passion for creativity and humor with art education students and her colleagues in Texas higher education institutions. As TAEA Higher Education Chair, Teri believes that:

Art education is crucial to our lives because every human being passes through life with a need to tell his or her story. Art gives us a voice. When we make art, we speak the thoughts and desires that come from our heads and our hearts through our hands. What a travesty it would be to live your days on earth without being able to share the most vital part of ourselves. As art educators, we help children tell their stories by teaching them the language of art, while guiding them with the tools and techniques that help them speak. (T. Evans-Palmer, personal communication, February 17, 2013)

HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENT DIVISION: ERIN BROOKE BARNETT

INTRODUCTION

by Hillary Bielstein

Erin Brooke Barnett is an amazing individual. I had the great fortune to first meet her through education classes at Texas State three years ago. In various group and individual projects, Brooke tended to stand out among our classmates. Her curricula was thorough and her goals were developed. As an art education student, Brooke was a member of the Texas Art Education Association (TAEA), attended conferences, and has been very involved in Texas State's Texas Art Education Association (TAEA) student chapter. When she and I worked together in the student chapter, she consistently volunteered to present lesson content, demonstrate projects and helped whenever possible.

ERIN IN HER OWN WORDS

My name is Erin Brooke Barnett. I am currently in my last semester at Texas State University and will be graduating in the summer with a Masters in Secondary Education, Art (K-12) certified, and Gifted/Talented Education. I work for the Dougherty Arts Center and School (DAC), part of the City of Austin Parks and Recreation department, as a visual-arts instructor. I teach Kindergarten through Fifth grade after-school arts enrichment at Travis Heights Elementary School (THES), through the DAC's Creativity Club program. I have been an instructor at THES since the beginning of the 2012-2013 school year. In this role, I am able to allow students to explore techniques and materials that would not be possible in the regular art room. This year we have created Andy Goldsworthy inspired installations using natural materials, puppetry, Gytaku (fish printing), recycled art, and explored art history and aesthetics. I value providing choice, divergent thinking, and problem-solving opportunities for my students. In addition, I am student teaching this semester and am teaching kindergarten through fifth grade art for my elementary placement at THES. I truly love teaching. Like art, teaching is a craft, and I am constantly looking to improve. In this vein, I have attended the last three TAEA conferences, continue my independent research on the benefits of art education and creativity in the education system as a whole, and look for ways to incorporate depth and complexity into lessons.

Art education is vital to the well-being and success of Texas students. The arts develop not only hand-eye coordination but allow students to develop a voice and a point of view. Arts education connects all core curriculum. Like I tell my students, to be a good artist you must have a little knowledge in math, science, history, and literature. It is a touchstone for helping us understand other cultures and the past. Participation in the arts has also been shown to help bridge the achievement gap for at-risk students in standardized tests and increase attendance in school. I believe art education should strive to teach divergent thinking, problem-solving, problem-formation, and creativity. It is the only time during the school



day that students can explore different, appropriate, and correct solutions to problems.

When I am looking for students to critically think about art, I use open-ended questioning. There is a lot of questioning taking place in my room, such as: Why did/didn't you like this? Why did this mistake happen? What do you feel was successful? How can we improve this piece? I turn the problem solving process around to fully engage the students. I explain that if I find the solution or do the mental lifting then it becomes "my work" and not theirs. I also encourage out of the box thinking, through weekly riddles or practical problem solving anecdotes.

I am truly passionate about art education. I feel that art teachers provide access to culture, self-expression, and help students understand people in other cultures and those who came before us. I am honored to be a member of TAEA and to be featured in Trends. TAEA represents the highest standards and practices for art educators in the state and to be included in this publication makes me feel that I'm doing something right. I know Hillary, from the Texas State University Art Educator preparation program, as a member of the student TAEA chapter and from assisting her during the 2012 TAEA Student Division conference meeting. Thanks Hillary!

CLOSING THOUGHTS

With her consistency of professional development, curriculum development, and her classroom environment development, Erin Brooke Barnett will be an exceptional teacher. I feel very fortunate to have grown as an educator with her and look forward to our continued friendship. She will definitely influence her students positively. Here's to her future classroom, may it be blessed with her developing wisdom and experience. Best of luck to your future endeavors, Brooke!



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Hillary Bielstein is a recent graduate of art education at Texas State University and currently substitute teaches in Austin ISD. She was appointed to Student Division Chair in December of 2011. Bielstein is also proud to have created and implemented curriculum for Advancing Robots, where she has taught elementary school level engineering and robotics to students all over the Austin area for the last six years.

MUSEUM EDUCATION DIVISION:
STEPHANIE PIEFER NIEMEYER

INTRODUCTION

by Elizabeth Roath

Stephanie Piefer Niemeyer is the manager of docent and university programs at the Blanton Museum of Art at The University of Texas at Austin. Working with multiple learning types including docents, university students, school groups, and participants in a special program focused on medical students, Stephanie continues to be driven in her work by helping visitors to look, discuss and interpret works of art. I first met Stephanie while I was a Gallery Teacher at the Blanton Museum. I was instantly impressed with her warmth and dedication to the diverse groups she encounters daily. She has been both a mentor and a colleague as I forge out my own art museum career and has inspired me to continue to be a lifelong learner.

STEPHANIE IN HER OWN WORDS

My name is Stephanie Piefer Niemeyer, and I work at the Blanton Museum of Art at The University of Texas at Austin. I have been at the Blanton for a little over six years, and before joining the Blanton, I worked at the Museum of Fine Arts (MFA), Houston. I have worked with all age levels, but currently, I am working with university students and with docents as well as contributing to the interpretation of special exhibitions. I have valued all of my positions in the museum education field, but I have found a new type of contentment working with UT students since I am a UT alumna. Preparing gallery lessons for an English class one day and a biology class the next has pushed me in directions and stretched my knowledge base in ways I would not have imagined.

Thinking about the diversity of classes that visit the Blanton, I am reminded about why I think art is so important to 21st century learning. Art allows so many connections to be made to so many different disciplines. I love that art can be used to teach math concepts to a group of fourth graders, and art can be used to teach poetry to high school seniors. Art can appeal to our creative side, our critical thinking side, and our social side. We can be quiet when we contemplate art, and we can be boisterous when we share what we see. Art reflects life, different cultures, and people's histories and stories. Becoming careful and thoughtful observers makes us more in tune with the world around us and what is going on around us; art can help by allowing us to slow down in our lives and look closely.



I've always been open to trying new things in the galleries and learning from my peers, and when I was at MFA Houston, I worked with Carrie Robinson-Cannon on an art and medicine gallery experience for medical students. Many art museums are initiating these types of programs, and when the opportunity for the Blanton came up to work with medical students, I gladly agreed to pilot the program. I really like to use portraits on these tours, but occasionally, I will mix it up with abstract painting as well. Narratives also lend themselves well to these tours because you can take in the particular moment in time that is presented to us. The Blanton and UT are fortunate that Dr. Elgin Ware donated a large collection of medical-theme prints for students to use for study. These prints range in age from the Renaissance to the 21st century. Prints are very intricate and call for careful study. We have used a number of these prints on tours with medical students. There are three things that I try to make happen regardless of what work of art is used: to look, to question, and to use the visual cues in front of us to begin to make interpretations.

I am incredibly honored that Kaela Hoskings and Elizabeth Roath, who represent the Texas Art Education Museum Division, asked to feature me in this publication. I met Kaela and Elizabeth when they were interns at the Blanton, and I have been inspired by the work they have done, do, and will do. They are part of a bright future in art education and museum education. Texas is lucky to have them!

CLOSING THOUGHTS

Stephanie is one of the jewels in art museum education who continues to touch the lives not just of visitors, but of fellow educators embarking on their own journeys in the museum. I am so glad that I was able to work with her and more importantly, to learn from her.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Elizabeth Roath is the Family Programs Coordinator at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. Prior to her work at the MFA Houston, she was a member of the education department at the Crow Collection of Asian Art in Dallas, Texas and the Blanton Museum of Art in Austin, Texas. She received her Master's in Art Education at the University of Texas and her Bachelor's of Fine Arts from the University of Oklahoma. She has over five years of museum education experience.



VOICES OF ART EDUCATORS: EXPANDING DISCOURSE

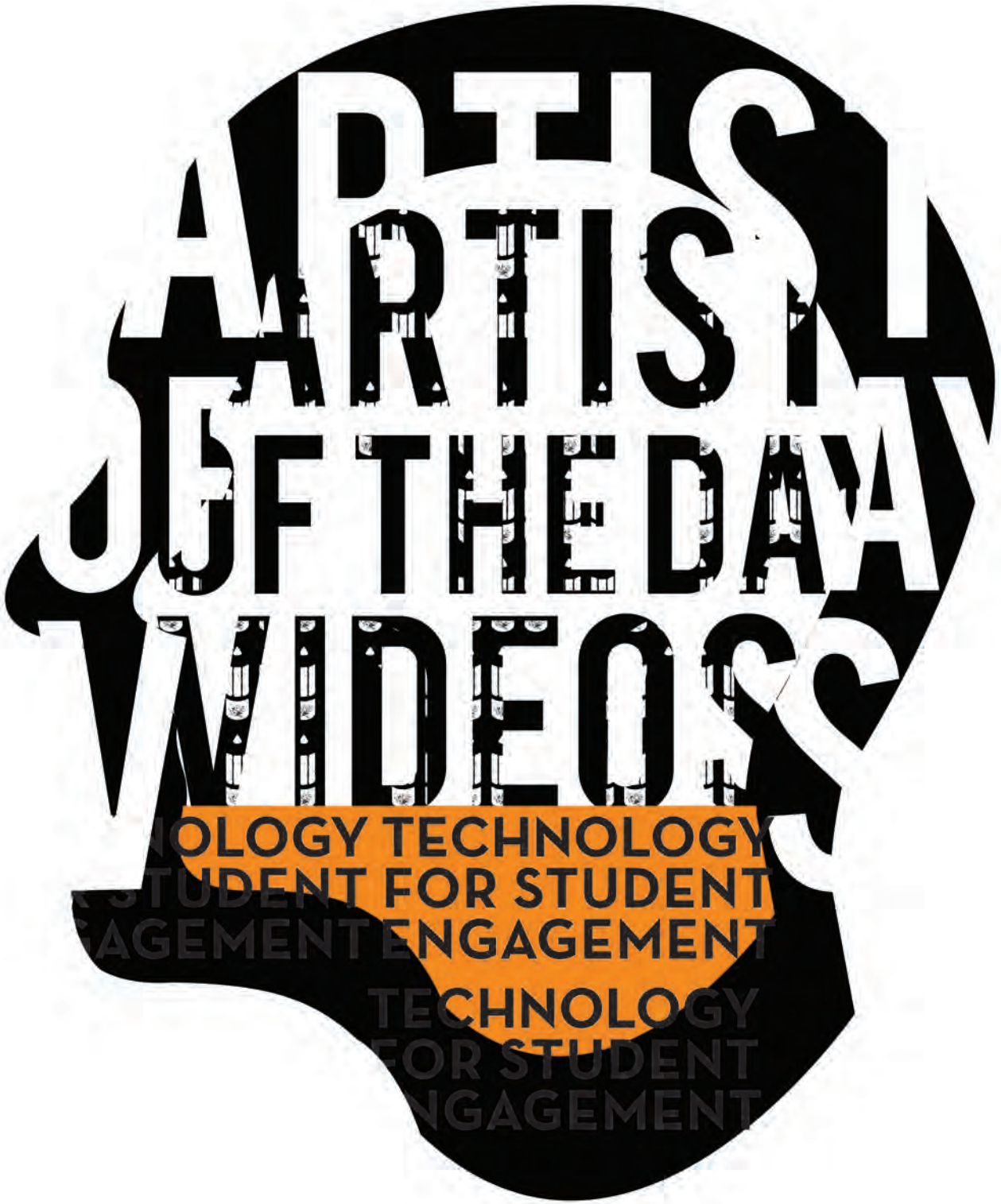


illustration by Jacob Bloom

CHRISTINE MILLER

ARTIST OF THE DAY VIDEOS: TECHNOLOGY FOR STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

by Christine Miller

Keywords: Technology, Contemporary Art, Student Engagement

The bell just rang, I have flipped the lights off and announced to my class, “OK! It’s time for the Artist of the Day video!” The video is queued up on my data projector, and I hit the play button. For the next 3-5 minutes, we watch a video about an artist or an art process that I found on YouTube, Vimeo, or an artist’s website. Most videos are professionally produced and have either a music soundtrack or audio track of the artist talking about their work. The multimedia presentation captures the class’s attention as they sit and take in the pick for the day. After the video, we have a short discussion about what they saw, and why they did or didn’t like it. On Fridays, each class votes for the Artist of the Day (AOD) video they liked best that week. The tallying on my white board reveals surprises for all of us! Sometimes I think I know who will come out on top, but many times my high school students surprise me with their votes. Regardless of their preferences, their opinions reflect that the AOD videos have been successful in getting them excited about art. The AOD video exposes them to contemporary artists work, new technologies they are using to create their art, the ideas behind their work, and the processes they use for their creations. AOD videos are a wonderful way to go beyond the classroom walls into the global art scene (See Figure 1).



FIGURE 1 Paper weaving by Christine Miller – Old World, New World

Twenty-first century learning strategies are being integrated into all content areas of education and art teachers too are expected to incorporate more technology in their instruction. Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan (2009) said, “Technology presents a huge opportunity...good teachers can utilize new technology to accelerate learning and provide extended learning opportunities for students” (Lemke, 2010, p. 245). Showing short videos of art, art processes, and artists found on the Internet is a quick, fun, and easy way to tap into the power of visual technology and create excellent learning opportunities for both the students and the teacher.

Value of Artist of the Day Videos

Videos are the new standard for viewing information and result in a higher percentage of student engagement. People learn better from combining

visuals with text and sound than through using either process alone (Lemke, 2010). Videos connect us to the real world in a dynamic and authentic way. With hardware that becomes exponentially more powerful each year, the ability to stream video has become more accessible in the classroom. One of the reasons newscasters use film footage to sensationalize the news is to make it more convincing and connect the viewer to the live action (Freedman, 2003). Photographs used to be the standard for image presentation, but now, with the capabilities of smart phones, videos are the preferred method of visual communication for this generation of students. Videos have taken visual literacy to new heights. For example, popular culture videos like PSY-Gangnam Style (Officialpsy, 2012) have had 1,119,330,599 views at this writing. Videos are an important way our students explore the world. When art teachers present art, our students want to not only see how an artist creates their work, but also want to hear them discuss how and why their work is relevant and important.

Twenty-first century learning skills encompass a wide range of ideas. You can find many expert interpretations and suggestions about how education needs to change in order to prepare students for jobs that don’t exist at this time. Some of the twenty-first century competencies we are teaching our students include: collaboration, critical thinking, problem solving, digital literacy, and communication. Our students are demanding that there be relevancy to what they are learning and that they be connected to the real world. AOD videos are compelling informational vehicles that tap into these pillars of twenty-first century learning. One of the artists I show my students, Jason de Caires Taylor, uses his art to advocate for an important real world problem to help save coral reefs, and he posts videos of his projects on his website (de Caires Taylor, n.d.) (See Figure 2). I also expose them to contemporary artists



FIGURE 2 Jason deCaires Taylor, The Gardener Underwater Sculpture, Wikimedia Commons.<http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:The-gardener-underwater-sculpture-jason-decaires-taylor.jpg>

using the latest technologies in new ways that display divergent thinking like Sachiko Kodama’s YouTube video, “When I Met This Material” (Evitruh, 2007). AOD videos can connect to any of these competencies and provide art educators with an instructional tool aligned with twenty-first century learning skills. More school districts and administrators are asking their teachers to incorporate these skills into their curriculum, and art educators need to take this charge seriously to remain relevant and respected in their educational community.

Artist of the Day Videos Engage Students

All ages of students are interested in seeing what artists are doing now. Appropriate content can be found that is tailored to the grade you are teaching, the artist you want to showcase, or a technique you want to demonstrate. My high school students enjoy hearing artists talk about their work directly through the AOD video; the contextual background the artists provide about their art help the students understand the how and why of their

work. New trends in art and multimedia experiences come to life through videos. Students are exposed to divergent thinking in contemporary art and are excited and engaged by AOD videos. I like to get my students' feedback about the videos, so on a midterm exam I asked them to pick two of the following questions and answer them. I've included a few of their responses to the questions I asked (personal communications, October 21, 2011):

The thing I like most about Artist of the Day is...it makes me think of art in my everyday life; it gets my creative juices flowing and gives me inspiration; and it inspires me to have a more open mind.

Artist of the Day helps me...open up the creative side of my mind to get ready for class; find inspiration to further improve my artwork; challenge my ideas of what art is; and analyze art better.

Artist of the day is fun because...it takes just a little time and helps you understand so much more about the world; it gets me in the mood for art; it expands my horizons; and it's a behind the scenes look at how an artist makes artwork.

I wish Artist of the Day was...something we could talk about the whole period; was longer!; and was ME. (See Figure 3)



FIGURE 3 Art Room Mascot

It's challenging to find instructional strategies that capture and hold the focus of our students' short attention spans. "When students are engaged and motivated and feel minimal stress, information flows freely through the affective filter in the amygdala and they achieve higher levels of cognition, make connections, and experience 'aha' moments" (Willis,

2004, p. 214). Isn't that what we want art to be about? AOD videos can bring art, past or present, right into their classroom and take our students to the streets, galleries, and museums of the world. From my own experience, it has been thrilling to introduce my students to art and artists that they wouldn't otherwise have had exposure to. They remember videos they have seen and reference them at later times in the year. I believe that AOD videos make a lasting impact with our students.

Exploring Aesthetics Using Artist of the Day Videos

Aesthetic activities in the art classroom are an important component of art exploration for the student. When they are asked to think and discuss the nature of art through their experiences, they begin to make distinctions, see connections, and often ask new questions (Stewart, 1997).



FIGURE 4 Is it Art?

I have used AOD Videos for several aesthetic activities that have been posted to my blog, Ms. Miller's Art Blog at: <http://tagartteacher.blogspot.com>. There one can find detailed explanations of each activity listed in this article, as well as links to the videos I show them and the questions I ask my students after we watch the videos. The aesthetic activities on my blog include topics like: the power of visual culture, video games and the importance of the visual, what is the purpose of art, does art have to be beautiful, and a favorite aesthetics question – is it art? (See Figure 4). Instead of class discussions, I ask the students to respond to the aesthetic questions I formulate by writing on paper. The depth of their responses is always impressive; what they might feel shy about saying in class, they are able to express freely in their writing. I am able to get a very accurate representation of their opinions this way.

One activity in particular was very exciting to me – The Power of Animation. I introduced my students to the work of Vladimir Kush, a contemporary Russian surrealist artist. The first video (Rododoro15, 2008) I showed them of his art panned through the body of his work with each painting displayed for 5 seconds. A pleasant musical soundtrack played throughout the video. The next day, I showed them another video of his work that was produced in a film trailer format: Vladimir Kush – Metaphorical Voyage Trailer (jslangeproductions, 2009), but this time his paintings were animated. Sails flapped in the wind, butterfly wings fluttered, eyes blinked, and water flowed. It was amazing to see his art come to life in this animated fashion. I asked my students how animation changed Kush's artwork. My questions read as follows:

We saw two videos about Vladimir Kush's surrealist painting. One video showed his paintings as static (or still) images – the other

video showed his paintings as animated images. His own art studio had someone produce the animated video.

Which do you like best – the static images or the animated images? Why? Why do you think he made this video animating his own paintings? Do you have any ideas about how he did this – what kind of software might he have used?

Astonishingly, 80% of the responses preferred the animated video! I wasn't surprised that my students would prefer the animation, but I was very surprised at the large percentage. Some of their reasons included: it had more drama; brings life to the painting; is more interesting and gives movement to the art; it felt like we were actually going deep inside the artwork; and the animated video gives more insight into what the artwork means (personal communications, March 3, 2012). I was blown away, but not as much as I was a few days later after I had posted the activity and the results to my blog. The animator of Mr. Kush's artwork, Jan Lange, stumbled on my post and made this comment on my blog:

I liked your post about Metaphorical Voyage. I found your poll very interesting about the animation vs. static. I am the actual animator that worked with Vladimir on the project (he is a painter obviously and good at it, animation is not his personal thing). My production company worked with him to make the film and is listed on the DVD. I have answers to your questions about software, etc. I promise no flash was used at all, and the project took several years. Regardless interesting read and thank you. (J. Lange, personal communication, March 9, 2012)

This response was like the icing on the cake! I realized, more than ever, that my students and I are part of a wide, global art community and that our explorations in class, through the Artist of the Day videos, could transport us to art and artists around the world.

Teach Art Techniques and Processes

If those aren't reasons enough to play with AOD videos in your classroom, I can tell you they are also an excellent resource for learning about many aspects of art making. You can use them in class for demonstrations of art materials, techniques, and processes. There are videos available for almost anything you might want to learn about and can be quick overviews, or longer, more in depth visual explanations. Many students have access to the Internet from home and can access information whenever they want, for further clarification, additional practice, or in depth study.

Encouraging your students to search for videos about artists, techniques, or materials leads to more student-directed learning, another pillar of 21st century learning practices. I see 170 high school students on a daily basis, and it is impossible for me to tailor art instruction to meet all of their individual interests. Finding their own videos deepens each student's access to instruction by searching for videos about topics they are interested in. In short, they take charge of their learning.

Getting Started

It's easy to start building your own library of AOD videos with a few simple steps. You can start out slow; maybe you show one video a week. The discovery process of finding interesting videos about art is fun. I usually get my line up Sunday, organizing one video for each day. Here are some suggestions that might help you put together your own AOD videos.

Plan a week of thematic videos: art careers, ceramic techniques, unusual art materials, or stop motion animation. They can strengthen your unit of instruction or be used as reviews. I teach 5 different preps each day, so it's difficult to show one video that is applicable to all classes.

There’s not enough time in my day to pick individual videos for each class. It’s also fun to compile a random lineup of videos you think your students might enjoy. AOD videos can also be an enrichment activity intended for variety and fun in your instruction, and not something that is necessarily directly tied to your project or unit.

Stumbleupon.com is a great site to use to find new artists and videos. A free website, you can tailor a checklist of your topic preferences (flowers, art, design, architecture, etc.) to help you pinpoint what you want to see when you click “stumble.” When you stumble on a site you like, track the selection back to the original URL to save in your database. You can view the new website free on the Stumbleupon web environment and save the link.

I use Evernote.com to organize all of the digital material I find (See Figure 5). Evernote is an extremely powerful database. You can create notebooks to store your notes in this free application. Notes are made for digital information, can be tagged, and have key labels to make your searching for them quick and easy. Notebooks can be shared with



FIGURE 5 Screenshot of Evernote

colleagues in your department or other teachers at your school, or some other school, and they can use the AOD videos in their class.

Viewpure.com is a free site that allows you to enter a URL for a video and it will strip it of comments or images of other video thumbnails that may be objectionable for your students to see. It’s so easy - it only takes a click to create a clean, pure environment to play your video.

Enjoy Your Own Adventure with Artist of the Day Videos

Artist of the Day videos have huge instructional potential in the art classroom. I feel like I have just scratched the surface of the many ways these videos can be used. There are just a few guidelines to keep in mind as you select your own videos to show.

Keep them short - three to five minutes - and your students will be attentive and engaged. When the videos get too long, they start mentally wandering away. Look for exciting, dynamic content! This is hard to describe, but you will get a feel for a style that you think your students will enjoy. They have a low threshold for boredom! When I haven’t been able to find a video, I will sometimes show them a website, but they always complain that websites are boring. Videos are the key to engaging them.

Find something you like. Your enthusiasm for the video you have found is important and can sometimes be contagious. I show each AOD video in every class I teach in one day, so that means I get to watch it six times each day! Five minutes times six classes = 30 minutes of AOD video heaven for me!

Have fun! Explore! Play! Let the students guide your selections. I will give students extra credit if they bring a satisfactory AOD video URL to me (it has to be teacher approved). They watch videos all the time and know where some good ones are. Let them participate in the fun of finding great art and artists in the world.

Olivia Gude (n.d.) states:

We owe it to our field and our students to study the art of our times and to begin...with probing questions and far-reaching goals. What do our students need to know to understand the art of many cultures, from the past and the 21st century? Today, what knowledge do students need to stimulate and increase their creative powers?

Through AOD videos, I believe students can see the many ways contemporary artists are creating art. They need to see artists’ divergent thinking in action, and hear the rationale behind their choices and artistic expressions. We need to encourage our students to seek out the information that is important and interesting to them, to help foster curiosity, wonder, and excitement in their art adventures. Artist of the Day videos have provided a dynamic tool for such exploration in my classroom, and my students love them. Begin your own adventure - fire up your data projector and turn the speakers up: it’s time for today’s Artist of the Day video! (See Figure 6)



FIGURE 6 Student Mixed Media Sculpture

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Survey Results of Elementary Instruction in the United States

illustration by Jacob Bloom

SURVEY RESULTS OF ELEMENTARY ART INSTRUCTION IN THE UNITED STATES

by Karin Tollefson-Hall & Bryna Bobick

KEYWORDS: *Surveys, Teaching Environments, & Pre-Service Concerns*

As art teachers spread out widely across school buildings, districts, counties, and states, we often look forward to the rare opportunities to come together at state and national conferences. This is a time to learn from others, restore our motivations for teaching, and compare curriculums, resources, and teaching experiences with our colleagues. Gatherings of art teachers are also one of the few times art teachers and agencies who advocate for art can get a sense of what is happening in art classrooms across a state, but this information is anecdotal and limited to those able to attend these meetings. How can agencies that advocate for art education collect better data on visual art programs across an entire state?

In 2008, the Virginia Art Education Association determined the need for data on arts education and as a result conducted an electronic survey of the elementary art instruction in Virginia. In this article we share the results of the research, and synthesize the significant findings of this study. In conclusion, we will suggest implications for the field of art education. While these are results specific to one state in the United States, the findings are an important addition to the body of statistical research on art education in public schools (Burton, 2001; Jeffers, 1996; Lahr, 1984). These results provide an example of the type of data that could be collected in a nationwide survey.

Relating the Virginia Survey to Elementary Texas Art Educators

Conducting a literature review focusing on demographic research involving Texas art educators, revealed a lack of published research. We contacted the Director of Enrichment Education, Curriculum Division, and asked if there were any surveys of Texas elementary art teachers. The Director suggested checking the Center for Education Development for the Fine Arts' website, <http://www.cedfa.org>. The Center's mission, goals and information pertaining to Texas fine arts programs is included in the website, but it did not contain any demographic research. Conducting a survey of Texas elementary art teachers would provide much needed contemporary information about art education in Texas elementary schools. This could be a possible thesis or dissertation topic for a graduate art education student.

Review of Literature on Survey Research

One aspect of demographic research is survey research. Surveys can be administered by mail, electronically, or by phone. The advantages of surveys include: rapid turnaround in data collection, convenience, and the ability to identify attributes within a group from a small population (Creswell, 1998; Fowler, 2009). Milbrandt and Klein (2010) point out that maintaining current demographic information about the field of art education is an ongoing challenge. Demographic research involving art educators has been collected by researchers such as Broome (2009), Burton (1998), Chapman (1982), Leshnoff (1997), Milbrandt (2002)

and Mims and Lankford (1995). In addition, Brewer (1999) conducted survey research related to the Demographic and Teacher Preparation Task Forces established by the National Art Education Association Research Commission. The overall purpose of the survey was to have a better understanding of the educational background, educational needs, and schedule preference for art teachers. Besides studies that are directly focused on art education, information related to art educators can be gleaned from other types of studies. Burton (1996) writes that demographic research involving art education has been collected, but the data is contained within wide-ranging reports such as national reports on educational topics.

Furthermore, Burton (2001) provided demographic baseline data that showed the kind, quality, and quantity of art instruction in secondary public and private schools across the United States. The survey focused on secondary art educators for two reasons. First, many of the elementary schools did not have art teachers. Second, differences in curriculum, instructional time, resources, and teaching practice between elementary and secondary art instruction support separate surveys. The curricula for elementary and secondary art education are unique and tailored for specific ages. For example, Advanced Placement art courses are offered in secondary art programs and provide opportunities for high school students to earn college art credit while still in high school. The types of media available for art making can be significantly different for elementary versus high school art instruction.

Surveys have been used in the states of Georgia and Florida for several purposes. Milbrandt (2002) conducted a survey to investigate the attitudes and practices of Georgia public school art educators with respect to addressing social issues through the art education curriculum. In the fall of 2000, 420 members of the Georgia Art Education Association (GAEA) received a survey in the mail. A total of 153 art teachers responded. Overall, the results found that participants supported social issues through art education and addressed them through art history, art criticism, or aesthetics. Bobick (2008) also surveyed elementary art teachers in Georgia using the GAEA mailing list. A total of 400 elementary art educators from all areas of the state participated in the survey. Questions asked teachers about their experiences with cooperative art education. Overall, the results showed elementary art teachers generally accepted the concept of cooperative learning within the visual art program and across the curriculum.

In Florida, Broome (2009) surveyed elementary art educators who were teaching multi-age classes. The purpose of this survey research was to collect foundational information on the setting of multi-age art instruction and on the practices and perceptions of art teachers in multi-age classrooms. The results showed that most multi-age art classes consisted of two or three consecutive grade level combinations.

It is important to remember that the results of our study cannot be generalized to Texas or any other state; further research is necessary. Jeffers (1993) reminds readers that a particular survey is limited by its sample. In Virginia surveys were sent to all elementary art educators in the state. However, one limitation of this survey is that the majority of completed surveys were from members of the Virginia Art Education Association.

Methodology of the Survey

In 2008, Dr. Bill Wightman, Professor of Art Education at James Madison University, collaborated with the Virginia Art Educators Association (VAEA) to generate a survey for elementary art teachers in the state of Virginia. Like the Texas Art Education Association (TAEA), the VAEA is the professional organization for Virginia art educators and also serves as an advocate for the arts at the local, regional, and national levels. Discussions with the board and membership determined a need to have data on the state of visual art instruction in elementary schools. As the Higher Education Division Director in 2008, Dr. Wightman agreed

to produce and disseminate an electronic survey. VAEA board members, who are elementary art teachers, provided input on the survey questions and the initial draft of the survey was piloted on two elementary teachers in the Harrisonburg, Virginia area. Piloting a survey is a way to test the questions on people who would be likely to receive the survey. Piloting is used to test question and response wording and to determine if more or less questions need to be included in the final survey.

Unlike Texas, in the Commonwealth of Virginia each school district or region has a fine arts supervisor. Supervisor contact information was collected from the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE). According to the VDOE, in 2008 there were 1,080 elementary art teachers in the state of Virginia. To disseminate the finalized survey, an email with an invitation explaining the survey and an active link to the survey was sent to every fine arts supervisor. The VAEA board instructed supervisors to forward the survey invitation to all of the elementary art teachers under their direction. The survey was also available on the home page of the VAEA. Besides the email invitation and website availability of the survey, computer stations at the VAEA state conference in Chantilly, Virginia on November 13-15, 2008 allowed teachers to complete the survey on site. Directions requested that only elementary art teachers complete the survey. Survey Monkey recorded 44 completed surveys on November 13-15, 2008. A total of 12.6% of the total responses to the survey occurred during the state conference.

Responses to the survey were collected from September 22, 2008 until December 14, 2008, totaling 349 completed surveys. Assuming that every elementary art teacher in the state received information about the survey through VAEA, the fine arts supervisor or both, the overall response rate for the survey was 32.31%.

SURVEY RESULTS

Teacher Demographics

Teachers were asked to list the school districts where they taught in the 2008-2009 academic year, which grade levels they taught (pk-6) and number of schools they served. Nearly all respondents, 342 of 349 teachers, listed the school district where they taught. In order to maintain privacy, the names of school districts will not be reproduced in this report. For grade levels taught, 23.4% of the respondents indicated they taught pre-kindergarten and 21.2% indicated they taught sixth grade. The inclusion of pre-kindergarten and sixth grade in elementary school varies widely within the state of Virginia resulting in low survey statistics for both groups throughout the survey. For that reason, this report will focus on the responses related to kindergarten through fifth grade.

In grades k-5 the response rates to the question “what grade levels do you currently teach? (Check all that apply)” ranged from 85.8% to 98.3%. The last demographic question asked teachers to report the number of schools in which they taught. A total of 344 teachers responded to the question. Most repondents, 246 teachers or 71.5% indicated they taught in one school. Fewer, 74 teachers or 21.5% marked that they taught in two schools. Only 19 teachers (5.5%) taught in three schools, 6 teachers (1.7%) taught in four schools and two teachers (0.6%) who responded to the question indicated that they taught in five schools.

Other topics addressed in the survey included type of teaching environment, frequency of art instruction for each grade level, class size, class duration, instruction of students with special needs, art budget, and perceptions of school support for the art program. It is not possible within the scope of this report to include the data from every question on the survey.

Teaching Environment and Frequency of Instruction

Art educators reported information about their elementary teaching environment. The first question related to teaching environment asked if they taught in a designated art room. A total of 329 teachers responded to the question and 305 (92.7%) indicated they had a designated art room. The subsequent question asked teachers if they do not have an art room, would they describe their situation as “art on a cart?” A total of 57 teachers responded to the question with 38 (66.7%) indicating “Yes” they do teach art from a cart that is moved into a host classroom. The number of responses concerning designated art rooms and art on the cart is larger than the 349 total completed surveys because many teachers noted in the comments to the question that they have an art room at one school and a cart in a second school. Because 28.5% of teachers taught in more than one school they responded more than once to questions regarding teaching environment. Teachers were also given the option to specify other teaching situations. Some interesting teaching situations were noted in the comments: 18 teachers shared a classroom with another teacher, usually from a different subject area; 12 teachers taught art in a portion of the cafeteria or gymnasium; 5 teachers taught art in a hallway; 11 teachers taught in a trailer that was not attached to the school building and 6 of those teachers did not have running water in the trailer.

In the survey, teachers reported how often students in each grade received art instruction. The key finding in the data about how often each grade level had art class was that for the teachers who completed the survey all students in grades 1-5 received art instruction during the school year. The percentage of teachers reporting that students in grades 1-5 had art class once a week ranged from 84%-89.9%. For grades 1-5, the percentage of teachers reporting that students had art class for the entire year ranged from 96.4%-97.3%. For all questions related to frequency of teaching art class in grades 1-5, the total number of responses ranged from 323-339.

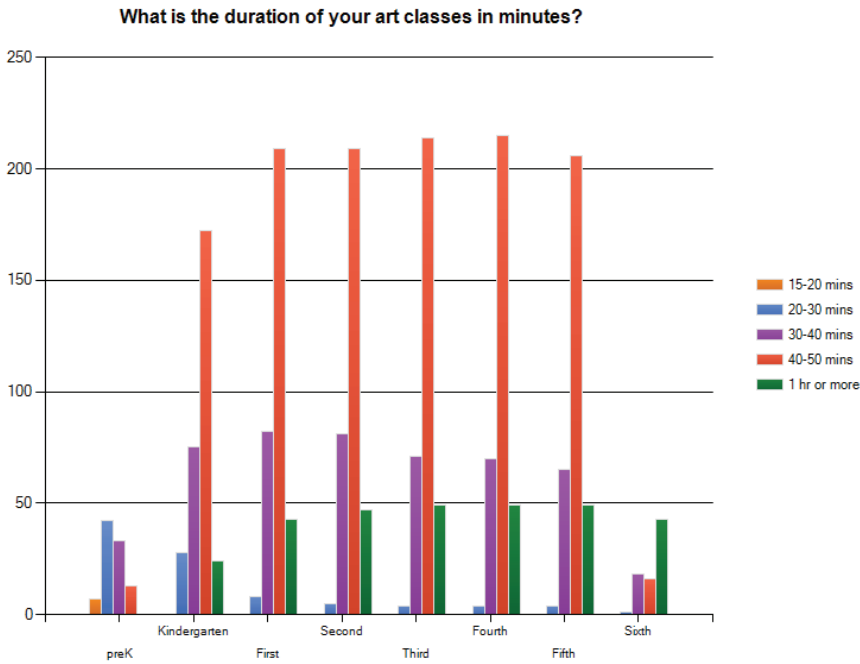


FIGURE 1 Class duration in minutes for grades pk-6.

Duration of the Art Classes

Nearly all, or 345 teachers responded to the questions about class duration. The most frequent response for pre-kindergarten was 20-30 minutes reported by 45.7% of teachers. Kindergarten through fifth grade all reported 40-50 minutes as the most frequent response for class duration with a percentage of responses ranging from 58.1% to 64.0%. The most frequent response to class duration for sixth grade was one hour or more with 55.1% (see Figure 1).

Class Size and Students with Special Needs.

For pre-kindergarten, the most frequent response (52.7%) to number of students in class was 16-20 students. For grades 1-5, the most frequent response was 21-25 students. The range of percentages of teachers who indicated they had 21-25 students in each class of grades 1-5 was 52.4%-60.5%. For sixth grade, the majority (nearly 66%) of class sizes ranged from 21-30 students. (see Figure 2).

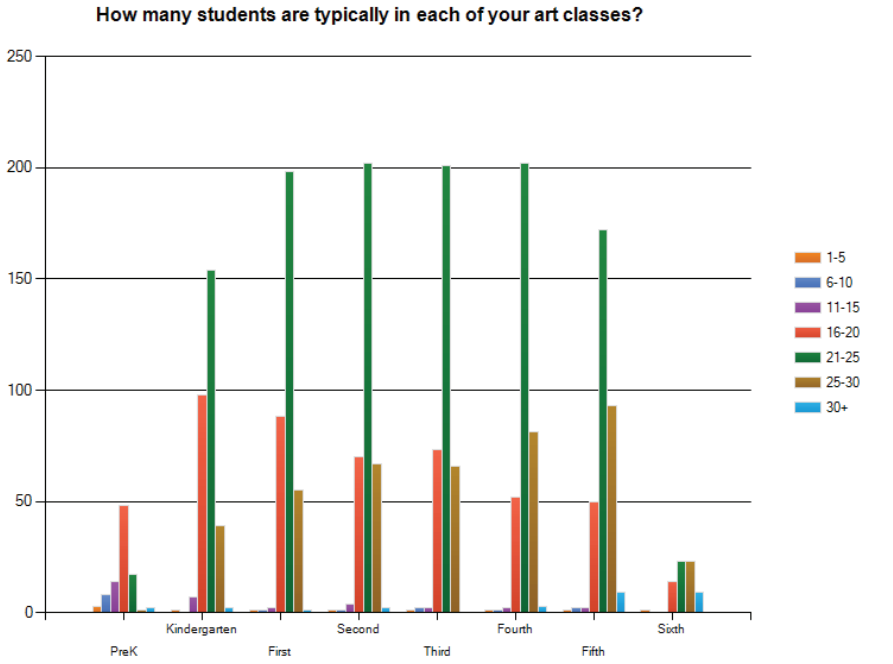


FIGURE 2 Class sizes for grades pk-6.

The survey included questions related to teaching students with special needs. 339 out of 342 (99.1%) teachers reported that they taught special education students in their art classes. 142 of 341 (41.6%) of teachers who taught special education students did not have an instructional aide attending the art class. Last, 242 of 342 (70.8%) of teachers had not received special training to work with students with special needs (see Figure 3).

Budgets and Support of the Art Program

School budget for art received positive responses with 213 out of 343 (62.1%) of teachers indicating the art budget “meets needs,” 16.3% reporting the art budget “exceeds needs” and 21.6% of teachers indicating the art budget “does not meet needs” (see Figure 4). Art teacher’s perceptions of support for the art program were also addressed in the survey. 55.1% of art teachers felt that teachers from other academic disciplines give “average” support to the art program. The Commonwealth of Virginia has state mandated standards (SOL’s) for all subject areas including art. The SOL’s are comparable to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills

(TEKS). 55.8% of art teachers indicated that teachers of other academic disciplines reinforced the SOL’s for art “sometimes” and 36.9% felt that teachers of other academic disciplines “never” reinforced art SOL’s in their teaching. At the same time 87.4% of art teachers reported that they worked collaboratively with teachers of other academic disciplines.

CONCLUSIONS

Art educators have several reasons to be proud of the art programs that are offered to elementary students. All children attending the schools represented in the responses to this survey, in grades 1-5, received art classes taught by an art teacher during the school year. Budgetary needs for art programs, while not always ideal, were meeting the teacher’s needs in a majority of schools. Art teachers were frequently involved in collaborations with other teachers in their buildings, and the majority of art teachers reported that they received support for the art program from administration and teachers of other academic disciplines.

Visual art instruction for elementary children still needs improvement in these areas: the instruction of students with special needs, staff development for art teachers, and the teaching environment. Because 99% of art teachers who participated in the survey are teaching students with special needs, and less than one third of those teachers have had training in special education, art teachers would benefit from staff development opportunities related to teaching special needs in the arts. Art teachers would be more able to effectively teach the children with special needs who are already in their classes with training addressed specifically to art and special education. Lastly, school overcrowding is problematic across the country and Virginia has not escaped the limited amount of space available for instruction in schools. While some art teachers reported finally receiving an art classroom, more lamented losing their classroom to growing enrollment. Art educators are bringing carts of materials

into classrooms to teach with limited space for projects and resources. They are making spaces in cafeterias, on stages and in gymnasiums, and sharing classrooms with music and reading teachers, often having to relocate during the day. The worst situations reported were art educators forced to teach in hallways and in trailers or rooms without running water. Art is a messy subject and hauling buckets of water on a daily basis to clean paintbrushes or other art tools, wash hands, and wipe off tables is not ideal for any art educator.

FUTURE RESEARCH

Demographic research pertaining to the teaching environment of elementary art educators is needed on a national level. These types of issues may exist across the country and more of this type of research benefits all art teachers. The results can be used to advocate for the importance of art education to the community, school administrators, funding agencies, policy makers, and parents. Future research may reveal findings not only pertinent to art educators, but also to others who work in elementary schools. In addition, it will spotlight the authentic teaching experiences of American elementary art teachers.

Have you received special training to work with special needs students?

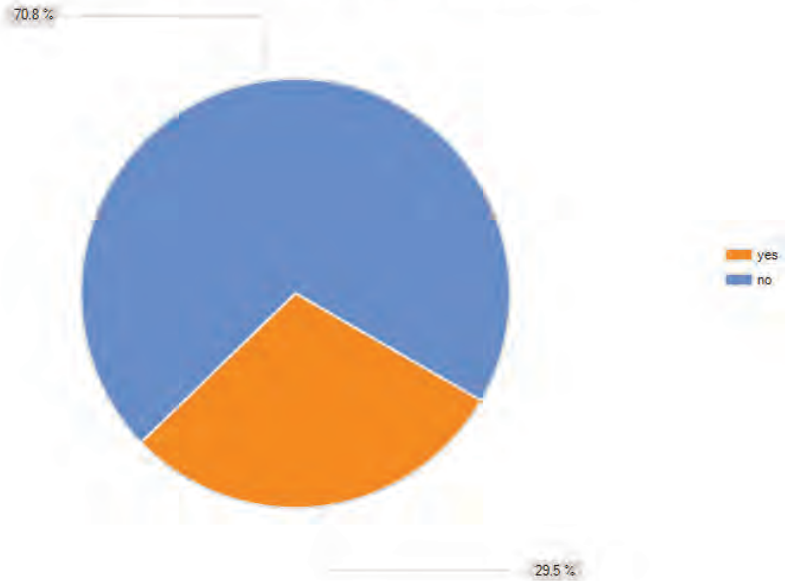


FIGURE 3 Teachers with special education training.

In the school(s) you teach in, how would you rate your allocated budget for art supplies/materials and teaching resources?

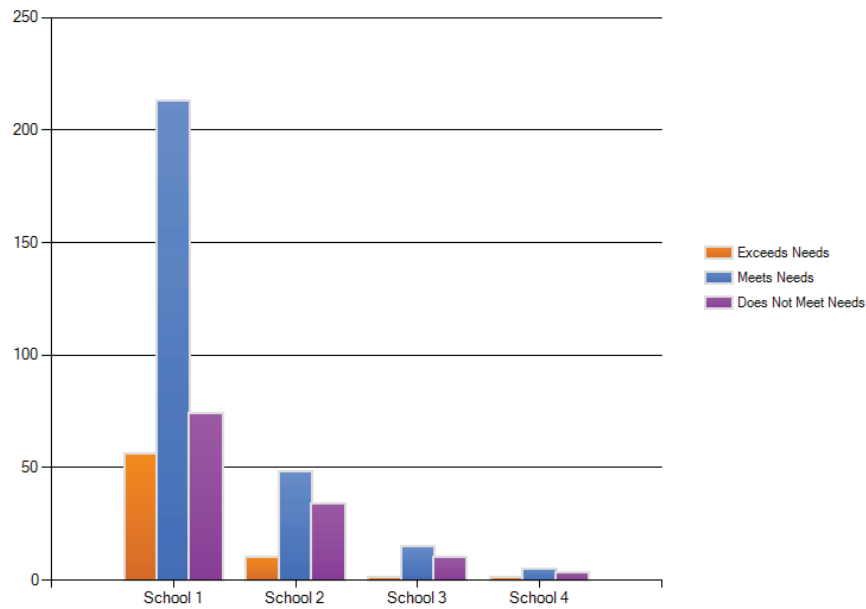


FIGURE 4 Art budgets.

Implications for Pre-service Art Education Teaching Programs

Even though this survey was conducted in Virginia, it is pertinent to pre-service art education programs in different states because elementary art teachers may face similar situations. Based on the survey data, university art education faculty must prepare pre-service art education majors for a variety of situations they will face as classroom teachers. First, it would be beneficial if university art education curricula offered instruction in teaching special needs students (Allison, 2008; Bain & Hasio, 2011; Blandy, 1994; Kraft, 2004). While many art education pre-service programs in Texas require special needs courses, instruction in how to teach children with special needs should be a part of every teacher preparation program. This would benefit both the student and teacher. All children deserve to be taught by an educator who is trained in how to address their individual needs. Art educators need to be better trained in how to accommodate all children in their classes individually and collectively. This could be incorporated into a practicum experience or an art education methods class. It should involve the art education majors both developing and teaching lessons to students with special needs.

Second, limited storage and classroom space should be addressed. Unfortunately, the survey results revealed art educators often share space with other teachers or may be housed in trailers. Addressing this issue and providing solutions would provide validity for the art programs. Pre-service art education majors need to be aware they may be sharing a classroom and should plan lessons that can be adapted for shared space.

Although teachers reported mostly positive attitudes about their art budgets, there was no uniform amount provided to art educators. In terms of budgets, Mims and Lankford (1993), point out that shrinking budgets for art classes appear to afflict many. For that reason, it would be helpful if pre-service students were introduced to creating budgets for an art classroom during their undergraduate art education curricula. This could provide an opening to discuss grant writing and finding art materials from community members at

little or no cost. Future research studies need to be conducted which involve yearly budgets. Finally, class sizes indicate that art teachers are teaching large numbers of students on limited budgets and in cramped classrooms.

In order to prepare qualified pre-service art education majors to be productive teachers, the results of the survey should be addressed in undergraduate art education curricula. Furthermore, these results should be studied by those in university education leadership programs, so future school administrators are familiar with the rewards and challenges art teachers encounter.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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illustration by Jacob Bloom

KIM BISHOP

THE TEXAS SIZE PRINT PROJECT

by Kim Bishop

Keywords: Cooperation, Community, & Creation

Competition has been shown to be useful up to a certain point and no further, but cooperation, which is the thing we must strive for today, begins where competition leaves off.

-Franklin D. Roosevelt.

I have been an artist all of my life and an art educator since 1989. Fortunately, I have been surrounded and influenced by creative and tolerant people who instilled in me the value of education, creativity, and giving to your community. Although I grew up in Austin, Texas, when I had the choice of where to live and work as an adult, I wanted to live in San Antonio. I immediately felt creative energy pulsating from artists in San Antonio who share my passion for art and who value the members and unique character of our local community. San Antonians are a reflection of the beautiful mixture of cultures that have settled on this land, from the original Native Americans, the Meso-Americans, and a wide variety of others, such as the Irish, Germans, and Polish, and we celebrate our heritage often during public events and festivals. I wanted to tap into that creative energy and I did.



FIGURE 1 Luis Valderas (left), Kim Bishop (center), and Paul Karam (right).

My name is Kim Bishop and I first met artists Paul Karam and Luis Valderas in 2006 during a printmaking event at Stone Metal Press, a local printmaking studio (Figure 1). We were instantly friends. In 2010 we formed Art To The Third Power, a creative collaborative of artists and educators whose mission is to engage local community members in the creation and exhibition of public art. We see art as a powerful and unifying element in a society that promotes kinship. With that spirit in mind, we developed a series of collaborative printmaking events called The Texas Size Print Project. This large-scale project gave us the opportunity to work with diverse individuals and organizations to explore the educational and business side of art, as well as produce creative outcomes in a social and collaborative framework. Together with my high school students, city leaders, volunteers, and others, we were able to share our own stories through ongoing educational interactions which helped us to realize the power of art to unite individuals through collaborations. This article seeks to highlight how The Texas Size Print Project unfolded and why we see this type of collaboration as mutually beneficial to diverse members of the community.

Conducting Research About Our Community

San Antonio is one of the oldest Spanish settlements in the country and thus has a rich history to consider (Jordan, 1981; Rosenbaum, 1981). According to our research (Jordan, 1981; Rosenbaum, 1981), Texas was explored and settled by the Spanish in the 16th century, then participated in the Mexican Revolution from 1810 to 1821 and became an active state in Mexico. This is why San Antonio has the highest population of Mexican-Americans per capita in the United States. During the time it belonged to Mexico, many European settlers, including some of my

ancestors, migrated to Texas to settle, accounting for our strong German, Irish, Czech, and other cultural group's traditions (they called themselves Texicans). In 1836, the fight for Texas Independence began. It centered on the Battle of the Alamo here in San Antonio, and much of it left strong veins of emotions intertwining our people together. In 1848, after being an Independent Republic for ten years, Texas was annexed or bought by the United States. With this came an influx of more immigrants and cultural traditions, more emotions, and a new identity for Texas largely based on the oil, gas, agriculture, and cattle industries. The subsequent revolutions and turmoil in Mexico continued the flow of immigrant and generational influences on Texas culture into present times. These traditions and senses of identity have infused with Native American traditions to create a distinct regional culture.

Karam, Valderas and I met twice a week for over a year planning and designing the project in response to our research. We began with the premise of community as a vital component to our artistic practices and the concept of creation as both a physical act of art making and as a spiritual belief system. We were examining diversity as it is reflected in our San Antonio population. We began by referencing Paul Gauguin's painting, *Where Do We Come From? What Are We? Where Are We Going?* Just as Gauguin investigated the meaning of existence in his 1897 masterpiece, we too were investigating our existence but not as individuals. We chose to examine our prevailing societal group. We see ourselves as a collection of pasts, cultures, and experiences that become an assemblage of ideas, which make up our contemporary society. Our artistic collaboration explores the transformation that occurred with the merging of Meso-American and European creation myths and cultures in the New World creating a modern hybrid rich with heritage. Our hope was to reflect the richness of our States' culture through our art by creating an 8' x 4' woodcut plate, and then cut the plates into three interchangeable pieces allowing the print image to become an intermingling of three artists' visions which resulted in an evolving representation of creation. Instead of making the prints ourselves, we invited members of the community to help us with this process, which became our first educational outreach initiative.

Educational Outreach Initiatives

Our role as artists is to visually educate with our perceptions of the world and in doing so reveal the power of art making. I am sure that is why two of us from Art To The Third Power have chosen to be art educators as well as artists. Maslow (1943) wrote, "The Musician must make music, an artist must paint, a poet must write if he is to be ultimately at peace with himself" (p.383). Maslow said that learning is the path to self-actualization, or reaching our full potential, and the goals of educators should encourage our own students to live up to their full potential. Along the same lines, in his theory The Law of Effect, psychologist Edward L. Thorndike (Cooper, n.d.) says that the Law of Exercise is to strengthen connections through practice. As educators we understand that teaching does not just take place in the classroom alone, that our students must fully experience something in order to learn. In his article, "A Revision of Bloom's Taxonomy: An Overview," Krathwohl (2002) lists the highest order of thinking as being to create, which calls for students to produce something. Paul, Luis, and I decided we wanted to invite my high school students to our first event as a sort of catalyst that would inspire them to see the possibilities of artistic collaboration and use this experience to encourage them to pursue their own artistic collaborations through creation. The first Texas-Size Print Project took place in September 2011 in the parking lot at the Blue Star Complex in San Antonio (Figures 2-4).



FIGURE 2 David Alcantar Inking Bishop's plate with MOSAIC student. Photo by Luis Valderas.

FIGURE 3 Ricky Armendariz inking Karam's plate. Photo by Luis Valderas.

FIGURE 4 James Borrego filming the print process. Photo by Luis Valderas

This community printmaking event included volunteer stations under tents set around the perimeter of the parking lot at Blue Star with explanations and information for spectators to consider. Meanwhile, my high school art club students were not only seeing community art in action, but they were also raising money by selling t-shirts and paletas—a type of Mexican ice cream bar to participants. Everyone had a specific role and by 2:00 p.m. all 30 prints, which were to later become part of the exhibition at Alamo Stadium, were completed and laying on the basement floor of the Blue Star complex for a two-week drying period (Figures 5 & 6).

Throughout the Texas Size Print Project we wanted to educate our



FIGURE 5 Photo of volunteers holding up print made in parking lot at Blue Star Contemporary Art Center (September 17, 2011). Photo by Luis Valderas.

FIGURE 6 Prints drying in the basement of Blue Star complex. Photo by Luis Valderas.

students about not only the process of making art, but also the business aspect of presenting your art. With the support of art educators including Alex Freeman and Kaela Hoskings from Artpace San Antonio, we were given the opportunity to have Luis Valderas work as an Artist in Residence with my students from October until December, 2011. Luis was able to work directly with my students and share his art making process with them, as well as discuss the business-side of art (Figure 7).

The process of learning in my class began by identifying student strengths and giving them the corresponding roles specific to those



FIGURE 7 Valderas presenting to my high school students. Photo by Luis Valderas.

strengths. Students took on the roles of filmmaker, photographer, organizers, designers, writers, and presenters. The class of seventeen was broken into three groups of five and six with the same objectives: design, present, create, and exhibit art. First, each group chose a piece of art from art history to represent their message. Valderas explained that as public artists we want to leave behind a message for the future and asked the students what they wanted to say to future generations. Working from a

historical art piece of their choice, the students designed their own images for their prints. The designs were justified in a written explanation that became the basis for their written proposals. Like actual public artists must do for making professional proposals, the students were required to write and orally present their designs to a panel of professionals for approval. After looking at examples of professional proposals written by other artists, the students designed and packaged their written proposals and images using the Pages program on Apple Mac. They created Power Points and practiced their presentations. Students presented their proposals to a panel of administrators and Artpace San Antonio professionals. For most of the students, it was their first time to dress professionally and speak publicly. They were very impressive and every student participated (Figure 8).

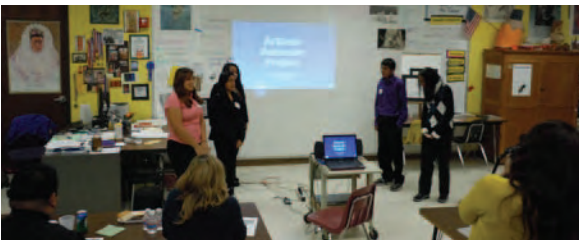


FIGURE 8 AP Art Students sharing their professional proposals in front of a panel of professionals. Photo by Kim Bishop.

Students Creating Art

With the approval of the student images, the first stage of the classroom component was complete. Next the students became the art makers. Luis Valderas and I demonstrated, facilitated, and led the students through the process of transferring their images onto 3'x 5' MDF panels. Valderas taught them accurate cutting techniques using Ryobi electric plunge routers and a Dremel tool in the wood shop room at the school. We then met six times after school and on weekends at our artist studio. The students ate pizza, documented, and carved their plates. It was often dusty and cold but my students were intent on completing their images (Figures 9-12).



FIGURES 9, 10, 11, AND 12 Images of students working at different stages of their carving and plate preparation. Photos by Kim Bishop and Luis Valderas.

On one freezing December day, my students and I went to the parking lot of Artpace San Antonio to realize our large scale student prints (Figures 13 & 14). Thanks to Holt Equipment and their donation of the steamroller and everyone at Artpace San Antonio, my A.P. Art History students carried out their own large-scale print event while their parents and our Principal Moises Ortiz looked on. Each group worked together as a team to stage, ink, print, and hang a total of 12 large black woodcut relief prints.



FIGURES 13-14 Students working on various stages of the carving and printing process. Photos by Kim Bishop and Luis Valderas.

After the ink dried the students painted and sealed their plates with acrylic and polyurethane (Figure 15). The printing plates are permanently hung in the main downstairs corridor of Brackenridge High School along with plaques with their names and a synopsis of each of the images. My students became actual public artists and print makers, an experience that taught cooperation, collaboration, and the concept that anything is possible. My students were realizing their full potential as Maslow (1943) recommended by finding their own real-world application of utilizing art to engage communities through art experiences.



FIGURE 15 Completed plates ready to be installed at Brackenridge High School. Photo by Kim Bishop.

The Public Art Display of The Texas Size Print Project

The unveiling of the Texas Size Print Project involved the display of thirty large woodcut relief print sections put together to span the size of a football field (Figure 16). In fact, it was a crisp, breezy morning on January 14, 2012, when close to 120 volunteers joined us in the ceremonial blessing at the center of Alamo Stadium, which is the site of many local high school football games. We all held hands around a Native American Shaman and Chair of the University of San Antonio's Art Department named Ricky Armendariz, as he blessed the field and offered our thanks for the opportunity to make history. We wanted to create a public art installation by involving people from the Mayor to my Brackenridge High School AP Art History students and the public to make something monumental in scale, but also it would serve to educate the community about the importance of art, culture, and collaboration.



FIGURE 16 The Temple Shot. (Installation view of The Texas Size Print Project at Alamo Stadium in San Antonio, Texas on January 14, 2012). Photo by David and Irene Castillo.

As we all held hands offering our thanks for the opportunity to make history on that cold day, we were making our own history. We stood in Alamo Stadium, or as the locals affectionately call it the "rock pile" and transformed its function from a place of football events to a place of collaborative art-making. It seemed the perfect venue for our installation as it is owned by the San Antonio Independent School District, which is the school district we belong to. It is part of our home culture. In fact, because we were at the rock pile right before it was to undergo a major

reconstruction in 2011, we coined our closing event as "The Last Mile at the Rock Pile." The "Mile" being the print itself. We could not have done this without the help and support of former Fine Arts Supervisor Isabel Romero and the San Antonio Independent School District's Athletic Department. From my research, I have not found another large-scale print public art installation such as this one and never before has one occurred inside historic Alamo Stadium. Each print required two to three people to walk the prints from the staging area, line them down the field, and at just the right time, raise them for the photo shoot. With the city as the backdrop, volunteers ranging from city dignitaries like the Mayor Julian Castro to Brackenridge High School students stood in line over the prints (Figure 17).



FIGURE 17 Prints lined up on the field with volunteers. Photo by Martha Chericó.

The event was well documented by both professionals and amateurs (Figure 18). Professional filmmaker James Borrego and photographers Luis M. Garza, Paul Cruz, and Irene and David Castillo were capturing images. In addition, our student filmmaker and photographers were allowed to shadow the professionals on the field. These students created their own 8-minute documentary on the process and installation of their prints. They interviewed participants including the Mayor and premiered their film at the Texas Size Print Project exhibition at the Blue Star Lab. Together they helped in creating an educational documentary of the public art installation from multiple vantage points. In addition, the photographs opened for exhibition in February at the Blue Star Lab Space in downtown San Antonio. The 26-minute documentary film by James Borrego premiered at the University of Texas San Antonio along with a display of the prints and the woodcut plates in June 2012. It became clear that the art was no longer the print. The art was the collaboration and cooperation of the people of San Antonio standing together for the purpose of making and sharing art.

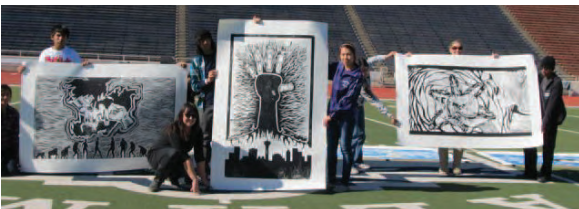


FIGURE 18 Student artists holding up their own prints at the unveiling event. Photo by Luis Valderas.

Conclusion

The Texas Size Print Project is not finished yet. Currently, we have expanded our goal to include regions outside of San Antonio. By making the print project global, we hope to increase our community of artists and add a contextual element of location and cooperation to the overall diversity of the work. We have connected with artists across the world in England and Africa to bring them into the conversation of a collective cooperative, to bring them into the classroom, and to expand our own perspectives on art, education, and community.

I have always believed that art is a reflection of and a reaction to the environment of the artist. In today's world, it would be difficult to create art in isolation. No matter what our endeavor, we must interact

cooperatively with others in order to be successful. Fourteen-year-old Mattie Stepanek (n.d.), American poet and peace advocate put it simply, "Unity is strength... when there is teamwork and collaboration, wonderful things can be achieved" (Retrieved from <http://www.mattieonline.com/>).

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kim Bishop was born and raised in Austin, Texas and is the mother of two sons and a recent grandmother. She received her Bachelor of Fine Arts from Southwest Texas State University (SWTSU) in San Marcos, Texas, in 1985 with a concentration in Commercial Art. As a post-graduate, Bishop received her Texas teaching certifications from SWTSU in 1989. She currently holds lifetime teaching certifications in All-Level Art, Secondary Art, Secondary History, Classroom Self-Contained with a Reading Content Specialty K- 8, and a Texas State Gifted and Talented Education endorsement. She received her Master of Arts in Secondary Curriculum Development with a concentration in Secondary Gifted and Talented Curriculum from Texas State University in 2003. With 25 years of teaching experience, she is currently teaching Art 1, Drawing 2 and Advanced Placement Art History at Brackenridge High School in San Antonio, Texas. Along with her teaching career, Bishop has maintained a career as an exhibiting painter, illustrator, and installation artist. She and her husband Luis Valderas own and operate 3rd Space Art Gallery in San Antonio, exhibiting their own work and featuring guest artists from around the world.

PORTRAYING
NATIVE
AMERICANS

a long road to ditching stereotypes

KIMBERLY JOHNSON RUTLEDGE

illustration by Jacob Bloom

PORTRAYING NATIVE AMERICANS: A LONG ROAD TO DITCHING STEREOTYPES

by Kimberly Johnson Rutledge

Keywords: Native Americans, Racism, and Stereotypes

To what level is it necessary for teachers to be familiar with Native American cultures? Who gets to decide how the Native American cultures are represented in art and the media (Ballengee-Morris & Stuhr, 2001; Desai 2000, 2002, 2005)? How does art respond? According to Wilma Mankiller, the first elected female chief of the Cherokee Nation, native people must themselves regain control of their image (Cornassel & Witmer, 2008). Teaching topics pertaining to Native Americans is challenging for educators due to ample incorrect and biased information and misrepresented images provided in books and artwork (see Figures 1 & 2). The media is saturated with celebrities parading about wearing their native appropriations making it difficult for students to know what is culturally right or wrong. However, portrayal of native people can be improved through education.



FIGURE 1 Grandfather and granddaughter playing make believe. Photographer: Andreas Stamm/ISTop/Getty Images. (The people in these images are models.)

FIGURE 2 Boys playing dress up outdoors. Photographer: JackSTAR/Cultura/Getty Images. (The people in these images are models.)

I am a teaching artist, as well as a core classroom teacher. As a native woman, I find the knowledge gained through a community of Native American tribes enables me to share information that permits a critical examination of the classroom status quo among educators. As a guest lecturer on topics relating to native cultural competence for educators, I find the questions regarding accuracy of information to be paramount for teachers who are trying to teach native topics responsibly. This article seeks to inform views about the need for re-thinking how we address Native American cultures and their art in the classroom--informed by research and my first hand perspective as a Native American woman.

Where do we begin with removing the ongoing racism from America? How can we rid the view of seeing non-white people as simply "the other" (Said, 1979; Spivak, 2003; Tenore, 2001)? In education, we begin at the primary level. Books that present animals wearing native objects or use language such as, "I" is for Indian, dehumanize native people. Dressing up

in "Indian costumes" as a form of fantasy play represents living people as fantastical, make-believe people. Classrooms and school libraries have resources such as DVDs and books with titles such as, "How the Indian Lived" placing native people into the category of past civilizations. One of the first questions non-Indian students ask about native people is, "Where did all the Indians go?" This is due to what students are learning in school, which leaves them with the impression that native people are all dead and gone. Many times students learn just enough where they are left believing that native people were a monolithic culture who lived in teepees, shot animals and each other with bow and arrow, wore buckskin, were very wise, had brown skin, scalped the colonists and settlers, and now seem to be gone from the face of the earth. These myths and stereotypes replace facts.

Why the Representation of Native Americans is Near and Dear to Me

Throughout my years of teaching, is because I have worked to honor the grandmothers who walked this land before me. I make it my focus to correct misinformation and reach as many educators as possible through my lectures, writings, and conversations. Currently, native people are not being rightfully honored and represented in classrooms across the United States because stereotypes and misinformation is taught (Understanding Prejudice, 2013). I knew when I accepted my Bachelor's of Fine Art diploma, donning very special soft moccasins, that I did well to honor my great-grandmother--Mungozeguo of the Miami Nation. Her descendants would be taken away from their community and placed into the white world. Many native children experienced trauma during this time period as they were taken from their tribes and assimilated into boarding schools and white homes in an attempt to "kill the Indian and save the man." These words regarding the education of Native Americans were spoken in the late 19th century by Captain Richard H. Pratt, the founder of the Carlisle Indian Industrial School, which was the first of several boarding schools where native children were sent (Utley, 2008). I was proud to honor my Miami grandmothers with that diploma. Later, I honored my mother, who was not able to complete high

school due to the Great Depression, with my Bachelor's in Education. Now, as I complete my Master's in Art Education, I find the struggle for fairness to be of utmost importance. My own granddaughter, who not only has roots in the Miami Nation but also as a child of the Oglala Lakota Nation, deserves better instruction from her future educators. What I did not truly understand was that the road my grandmothers made for me would be very long and difficult.

Following a chance encounter with a book in 2007, which I found while browsing titles in the children's Native American section, changed my approach to how I handle issues of stereotypes and the perpetual misinformation presented in classrooms. I could no longer live to honor my grandmothers. I needed to protect them. This 2006 book, entitled *Chief Hawah's Book of Native American Indians*, illustrated by Chris Brown, was not what I was looking for, but it was what I found. At first glance, the cover jumped out at me. I was mortified to see an illustration of a native man depicted as a horrible savage blazon across the cover. It was exactly like the images of native people with which I had grown up with in the 60s and 70s. Panicked with a terrible feeling having this book in my hands, I raced up to the cashier to purchase it as a means to remove it from the store. A few minutes later, as I sat in my car preparing to leave,

I paused for a reality check. I thought that I was saving the world from this book, but then realized that there were many more published copies.

My passion for native topics runs deep. From the time I was a sophomore in high school, I wanted to make a difference to honor my grandmothers. They were women who saw true horror and experienced true struggles. My mother who worried about discrimination discouraged me from identifying myself on an official document as "Native American." As a young woman learning and keeping the true traditions alive became my quiet, private life goal. However, that quiet life changed when I pulled Chris Brown's illustrated book off the shelf. I did not know what to do, but I knew I must do something. Someday I would be a grandmother too, and I was worried about my future granddaughter's place and representation in this nation. As an artist, teacher, and native woman, I needed to act.

Removing the book from store shelves proved to be a futile effort even with excellent support from many great people. Sadly, when I wrote and explained how negative stereotypes misrepresent native people to children and requested another major bookstore to remove the book, I received a reply to my request stating actions similar to Hitler and Stalin. Looking at those printed words on their beautifully embossed stationary only fueled my fire. Having two of the biggest retail bookstores being unsympathetic about mis-educating children, made me realize I must look for new approaches. There was no step-by-step guide, so I continued to search for opportunities to find similar circumstances or an advisor.

My first opportunity came when I discovered Jaune Quick-to-See Smith, internationally known artist and native activist who was the keynote speaker for the Nebraska Art Educators Association conference in Chadron, Nebraska. She facilitated a printmaking workshop at the conference, so I decided to attend with two other Nebraska art teachers and make the eight-hour journey to Chadron.

Once we arrived, I discovered that all spaces for the printmaking workshop were full. My art teacher friends registered early, so they attended the workshop. Feeling panicky, I brainstormed ideas about how to speak with Jaune because I needed her advice about removing the book from store shelves. My moment came when the professor in charge stepped out. I threw on an apron and posed as a helper in the printmaking workshop. The crashing of the workshop worked, and the time spent with Jaune was excellent. She provided invaluable advice on steps to take in regard to the book. She also requested that I send her the petition to the publisher, which politely asked them to stop publishing the book. She



FIGURE 3 Kymi Johnson Rutledge (left) and Juane Quick-to-See Smith (right). (Photo courtesy of Kymi Rutledge.)

noted that she would send it to the network of Native American colleges across the country for signatures.

I began presenting a series of lectures to local high schools and universities while continuing to look for opportunities to eliminate stereotypes of Native Americans. When internationally known Winona LaDuke spoke at the University of Nebraska at Omaha, I attended and was able to

speak with her. Like Juane, she was not surprised by the lack of cultural sensitivity that I experienced with the various bookstores. She provided great advice about continuing the fight and looking for opportunities to share the issue with the public. She ended our conversation with these words, "Never stop. Keep going. Many people just get tired of the conflict and stop. Don't stop" (W. LaDuke, personal communication, 2006). Her words resound in my mind when things get tough.

There is a great deal of misinformation about native people in the American public, which continues to be perpetuated. Soon after speaking with her, I experienced another tough moment. This moment came when an art teacher colleague looked at the stereotypical illustrations in the book and responded that she saw nothing wrong. In her opinion, she was sure that Native Americans "used to look like that." Her words illustrated the lack of accurate information provided in schools and the reliance on negative stereotypes. It was what Winona LaDuke warned me about, so I keep going. I do not stop.

The next opportunity to reach more educators came when I went to the office of Professor Wilma Kuhlman, at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. She understood my concern. Her courses demonstrated how building respect and understanding, which seeks to honor cultural pluralism in the classroom and creates an atmosphere of equality for all students, was important. Dr. Kuhlman continues to invite me as a guest lecturer for her Multicultural Literature course. It has become a welcoming and consistent place for me to reach graduate level educators who are interested in cultural competence.

Stereotypes of Native People: Understanding the Significance of Maintaining the Status Quo

It is important to understand why I am suggesting that art educators understand the issues and represent Native Americans with accurate information. Many Americans are unmindful to the negative stereotypes that permeate our society on the deepest levels. I encounter many thoughtful, intelligent people from across the country who have no idea where or why they believe certain things about Native Americans. Might it be that their misinformation and education about native people came from Hollywood? Many do not understand how this harms a culture or tradition because they have become desensitized by popular media.

Reviewing history, we can see where it all started. As the non-native appetite grew for more and more land, the "land-hungry settlers...were happy enough to conclude that they...ought to be gotten out of the way" (Ashwill, 2000). Professor Brian W. Dippie (n.d.) explains that natives were characterized as savages. Savages were likely much easier to kill than civilized human beings. Cotton Mather, the politically influential Puritan minister, celebrated the gruesome massacre of a Pequot village of women, children, and elderly men saying, "In a little more than one hour, five or six hundred of these barbarians were dismissed from a world that was burdened with them" (Stannard 1992, p. 114). President George Washington, in 1779, ordered an attack of the Iroquois to "lay waste" of them, and leave them "destroyed." His Major General John Sullivan attacked as instructed, then reported he had, "destroy[ed] everything..." and the indigenous people were "hunted like wild beasts" in a "war of extermination." In 1783, Washington would say Indians were no different than wolves, "both being beasts of prey, tho' they differ in shape" (Stannard, 1992, p. 114). An article from the Daily Evening Telegraph, Philadelphia, dated August 4, 1879, typically supports the campaign to create a negative, condescending opinion of native people in order to justify to what some European Americans call the "Indian problem" (Fleming, 2003, p. 128). The article entitled, *The Noble Red Man: Life in Sitting Bull's Camp* states,

Among the virtues of the Indian - the crafty and cruel Sioux...he feeds his guest and goes hungry himself... Indians... are popular in their tribe, not because they are brave, but because they are

witty... I have seen an Indian, with an appetite three days old, conceal the food he has begged and hurrying to his lodge, cram it down the throat of a three-year old savage...(1879, para. 1)

Unfortunately, the colonists' rhetoric is still alive and well, which leaves students surrounded with negative stereotypes of native people. Inaccurate, biased, stereotypical information results in students who do not have an authentic understanding. "Playing Indian" can rightfully be called an American pastime such as the Boy Scouts and other day camps for non-native children enacting "Indian rituals" (Shanley, 1997, p. 678). Native people see the New Age spiritual sweat lodges and vision quests as non-natives playing fake Indians.

A current trend of non-native people appropriating culturally sensitive and sometimes sacred objects, often misusing them in inappropriate ways, is seen in the literal wave of recent "oops" by celebrities and clothing designers. The stories of their missteps have basically been kept out of most mainstream news, but several popular designers and celebrities have been forced to toss their plans for misusing, misrepresenting, and exploiting native people. Paul Frank apologized for the offensive and racist Native American themed "Dream Catchin' Party" that came complete with tomahawks and war bonnets (Sieczkowski, 2012). Gwyn Stefani's portrayal of a native woman in No Doubt's video "Looking Hot" was taken down after native outcry over the overt sexuality of Ms. Stefani struggling with her hands bound as she was being punished (Charleyboy, 2012). Most recently, Victoria's Secret learned what not to do when appropriating sacred objects. Using them in an inappropriate way on an underwear clad model again brought native country and its supporters screaming loudly. The company decided not to use the popular model Karlie Kloss in her appropriated native headdress on their TV broadcast and apologized for the use of the headdress which caused people to be upset (Grinberg, 2012). Natives throughout the country quickly and astutely pointed out the headdress didn't "cause" the upset, it was the poor decision made by the company who chose to use a sacred object in an offensive way.

It is upsetting and disheartening when native people have to hear loud resistance of support of the racist images and ideas: "We are celebrating your culture." "We are honoring you." "Isn't imitation the best form of flattery?" Few people take the no thank you messages given by native people as an acceptable response.

To make matters worse, the comments become as horrific as the images. CNN writer, Emanuella Grinberg (2012) wrote *Native American Designers Fight Cultural Caricatures*, an article explaining the issue from the perspective of native people. Unfortunately, her writing proved how hot the topic was to handle as it was followed by hundreds of typical online comments by readers that were leveled at native people who cry foul on native appropriations. The messages are reminiscent of the hate-filled words of the past proving that today's racists do not hide beneath pointy white hats. They hide behind computer screens.

Luckily, it would be highly unusual for a student of the 21st century to go into any local bookstore and find books with images of African Americans depicted as the negative stereotype of a racial caricature of a "Picaninny," which was popular in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Unfortunately, it is still easy to find its equal in the Native American section. Students who need information cannot get accurate images of native people when the media is saturated with the opposite. Simply doing a web search of Native Americans or American Indians will dump a plethora of images of non-native people playing dress-up like a native person (see Figures 4 & 5). People who consider dressing up a child or themselves as an African-American slave for Halloween or putting on blackface likely know doing so is obviously racist. However, people often dress-up like "Indians" complete with sacred war paint and sacred war bonnets (Metcalf, 2012). It is a double standard of cultural and racial proportions. There should be no one dressing up like a minority or subjugate culture. This includes dressing up pets like native people. It is wrong and perpetuates negative stereotypes. Simon Moya-Smith (2012)

explains in, "Two Reasons Why It's Wrong to Dress Up Like an Indian" that by doing so forces Native American children to see their culture mocked in "gross displays" (para. 8).



FIGURE 4 Red Indian. Photographer: Bahadır Kuyucu/Vetta/GettyImages.

(The person in this image is a model.)

Avoiding negative images is difficult. Even the best companies that sell professional images shot by professional photographers using professional models have fallen victim to the same cultural ignorance. Getty Images, Shutterstock, and similar companies are reputable sources for stock photos, which connect consumers with high quality professional images. However, they seemingly do not show much oversight on the images under the categories of Native American or American Indian as they have many negative stereotyped images of non-native people playing "Indian." It should not take a native person to act on negative stereotypes; anyone can and should take action when coming across this type of image.



FIGURE 5 Couple on road trip. Photographer: Milk & Honey Creative/Brand X Pictures/Getty Images.

(The person in this image is a model.)

Who Gets to Decide How the Native American Cultures are Represented in Art and the Media?

How natives would like to be represented must come from the Native Americans who are a part of that community and nation. Others' voices do not have the authority to speak for an entire race of people including the many claiming to be native by way of a long lost ancestor who had native blood, via a great-great grandmother who was an "Indian Princess," or one who has no ties to the Native American community. Consequently, if Native Americans are saying they are offended, then America must hear them without making excuses for bad behavior with insulting remarks. Non-natives who choose to wear headdresses that look like Plains-style war bonnets could be seen as similar to wearing blackface. The feathers in the bonnets have been earned and are sacred. Non-natives cannot decide to mimic natives using a free ticket provided by the First Amendment to the Constitution by claiming free speech. The amendment may keep the U.S. government out of the conversation, but it will not keep the insulting

act from the loud backlash of native groups across the country.

Does this mean non-natives cannot use native culture in their artwork? It is important to consider to what degree the artist understands the subject culture because it is also part of the information of that work. One of the first American artists, whose art career was established in painting Native American cultures, was George Catlin. His work is a treasure-trove for historians. The contemporary artist-as-ethnographer can look back at his work and see some similarities to the objections that Dipti Desai (2002) discusses regarding concerns of "pseudo-ethnography" (p. 309). Depending on how the work is used in the future may not be how the artist originally intended or the details surrounding the culture depicted. When we look at George Catlin's work in museums, the details about the process and thinking behind the artwork are not shared.

President Andrew Jackson signed the Indian Removal Act on May 28, 1830. George Catlin left for his first expedition to Indian country in July of 1830. When observing Catlin's artwork, this is an important detail. Many of the people he depicted were living through the most profoundly devastating time period of cultural destruction. Although it began with the arrival of the Europeans, it ended with what David E. Stannard terms the "American Indian holocaust" in his book, *American Holocaust* (Stannard, 1992, p.xxii).

Catlin's work and its placement is about the importance of power and authority. Hanging Catlin's work in a room of "Native American Art" is deceiving. It is artwork of Native Americans, not by Native Americans. Catlin produced work in different locations, but it is all illustrations of a documentary nature. It is not a true understanding of the cultural traditions observed or day-to-day life of the people. There is a small percentage of contemporary artwork by native artists found in museums. Katherine Abu Hadal (2012) explains in, "Why Native American Art Doesn't Belong in the American Museum of Natural History,"

"Native American" is lumped in with natural history exhibits; it sends a message that these groups are a part of the "natural" world. That the art they produce is somehow less cultured and developed than the western art canon. It also sends the message that they are historical, an element of the romantic past" (para. 4).

A minority culture's representation and lack of representation in museums can be seen as a result of who has the power and authority. The way a minority's culture is represented in artwork can also be a result of power and authority. Catlin is important in this discussion because he is a highly prized American artist whose work demonstrates the complexities of culturally based artwork. He shows us that like his work, even the artist-ethnographers of today, who are representing cultures other than their own, are not living in a bias free justice zone. From what I see today, like the past, we live in an art world with a system that does not expose "hidden agendas" (Desai, 2002, p. 309).

If art education wants to "provide accurate and authentic representations of the art of racially and ethnically marginalized groups in the United States and of minority cultures around the world," (Desai, 2000, p.114) then changes must be made for more accurate, authentic information. Subsequently, teachers need to be receptive of cultural understandings within the classroom and in pedagogical content. For example, can educators truly understand each group of native people in the North, Central, and South American regions well enough to teach about their cultures accurately? Great diversity is found with over 600 tribes, each having a separate culture of language, religion, and tradition. Consequently, the hurried teacher who must incorporate certain cultures to meet the needs of a "managed" diversity (Desai, 2005, p. 296) curriculum relies on what they think is true. If we use textbooks and resources created by those who do not include the native perspective, then we do not have accurate

information for our students, as the authentic culture is reshaped by an outside perspective.

We accept what we learn in school as accurate. However, it is always best for educators to responsibly continue their own education into deeper levels, especially if conflicting information is discovered. As minority cultures continue to live with the legacy of Colonial rhetoric, teachers must not ignore the enduring effects of it on the cultures (Desai, 2000). Yet, how many of us have had our students participate in dressing up like Pilgrims and Indians, or make feather headdresses? Can we honestly say we have never made remarks in front of students such as sitting "Indian-style" or "too many chiefs, not enough Indians?" Has it become part of the American fiber?

If we are trying to incorporate accurate representations of race and ethnicity into our themes of curriculum, then looking at the ways minority cultures are treated by the world of art and education would seem to be of greatest importance. Would not social justice in education be most meaningful if it is informed by a collection of well-informed perspectives that are based on extensive research and situated predominately from the perspectives of members of the cultural groups of study (Ballengee-Morris & Stuhr, 2001)? It must be based on deep and socially, culturally, and historically grounded research. But, can an artist, anthropologist, or museum present information that is bias free? Or do those entities have a bias or perspective that comes through in their work? Are we looking at their work through our own prejudices? Educators must do more to provide resources that are reflective of the native cultures they represent by seeking their perspective. It is necessary for teachers to become familiar with the basics of Native American cultures to end the program of starting children off on the wrong foot. Paper bag vests and colored paper war bonnets turn sacred regalia into simplistic costumes that do nothing positive for Native Americans or any other American for that matter.

After a meeting in Omaha in 2010, with a representative of the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian's External Affairs Office, I learned that making a large number of high quality lesson plans available was difficult-- due to time and money. The NMAI is working actively on developing a National Education Initiative in order to provide more educational resources to teachers in addition to what they already provide (L. Krafur, personal communication, November 7, 2010). The lessons must come from reliable sources and never from a search engine's random results. Few Native American lessons found by that method will result in accurate information, and many will be based on stereotypes and myth which perpetuates the problem.

Tips for the Classroom to Ditch Stereotypes of Native Americans

Objects such as feathers, war bonnets, headdresses, face paint, and tobacco and sage are all among the many sacred objects of the various tribes. Consequently, teachers should not teach lessons that make paper headdresses or paint faces "like Indians." Instead, students could connect their own culture with what they learned from a specific Native American nation. A responsible alternative to this approach is to have students create artwork using symbols of U.S. military decorations, awards, and badges. Feathers are sacred such as those found in war bonnets are awarded for acts of bravery. There is a "long tradition of American Indians compromising an integral part of our Nation's military" (Klein, Holiday, Bell & Wells, 2006, p. 6). Military service is a cultural tradition among native people that has always been held in the highest regard. Eagle feathers are awarded to Native Americans for contributions such as their military duty; consequently other military decorations, etc. are fitting for projects instead of feathers.

Totem pole imagery has a direct correlation with a coming together of those in the spirit world with human beings. Teachers should not teach lessons based on sacred or ceremonial objects. It is like a non-Christian teacher telling language arts students to write their own bible for worship. Teaching the meaning is excellent, but replicating them is not. One option

might be to discuss the symbols found in totem poles as well as various other religions. Allow students to create a two or three-dimensional artwork of symbols (religious or not) that have importance to their own family.

Using cartoon images created by animators is not always the best way to present accurate information. It is fine for teaching animation styles but not for teaching about native people. Art educators might look for images created by native artists. Overtly sexualized images must not be used. An example project might be teaching the history in the Plains Ledger Art and have students create their own ledger book using recycled notebook paper and colored pencil to show historical events from their own lives.

Teaching solely about past native people and tribes and not including current native culture is a misrepresentation—many tribes and communities are alive, growing, and thriving. When teaching the history, balance historical depictions with contemporary images.

Connect contemporary artwork with historical and traditional artwork. Native people value elders and traditions. Students could respond to this tradition by creating art based on their own family or cultural traditions including their elders.

Each tribe is a unique culture with its own language and tradition. When developing a lesson, it is important to use well-informed representatives of the tribe or nation, rather than trusting information from the Internet or other questionable sources.

There are Many Excellent Native Artists to Use in the Classroom. Among Them Are:

- Jaune Quick-to-See Smith
- Fritz Scholder
- James Luna
- Kay Walkingstick
- Truman Lowe
- Alan Michelson
- Bently Spang
- Hachivi Edgar heap of Birds
- Ryan Rice
- Edward Poitras
- Tom Fields
- Steven Deo
- Authur Amiotte
- Robert Davidson
- Stephen Mopope
- Blackbear Bosin
- Charlene Teters
- Oscar Howe
- Shelley Niro
- Emmi Whitehorse
- Jolene Rickard
- Alex Janvier
- Norval Morrisseau
- Carl Beam

An artist, whose work is worthy of a close following, is creating a connection of cultures that nearly all students appreciate (see Figures 6–9). His name is Steven Paul Judd (Kiowa/Choctaw). He is known primarily as a filmmaker; however, his two-dimensional work combines the vital, traditional, native perspective with American pop culture. Students “get it.”



FIGURE 6 Image of artist Steven Paul Judd. (Photos are courtesy of Steven Paul Judd)



FIGURE 7 Hulk by Steven Paul Judd. (Acrylic on canvas)

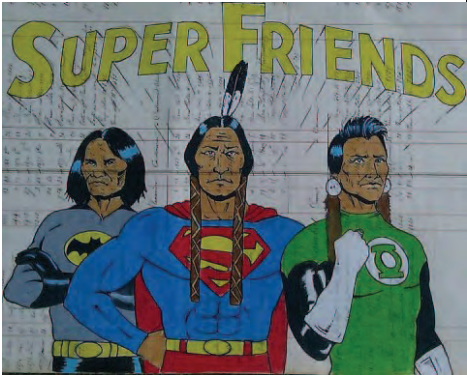


FIGURE 8 Super Friends by Steven Paul Judd. (Prismacolor and India ink on vintage 1868 Ledger paper)



FIGURE 9 Traditional Native American Clothing of the Early 21st Century by Steven Paul Judd. (Prismacolor on paper)



CONCLUSION

It must not take a native person to recognize and act on negative stereotypes. Negative stereotypes are a poor substitute for understanding native people (Fleming, 2007). At the very least, teachers must take responsibility to seek out resources that present native people in a positive, accurate light. Stereotypes can have devastating effects when people believe they are facts. For example, notions such as we are not all drunks who get free money from the government, all made wealthy from casino revenue, we are not all one with nature, nor are we all deeply religious (Fleming, 2007). Those are stereotypes that are accepted by many Americans as facts. It is equally as important to consider that natives are not savages of the enduring Colonial rhetoric spoken of in the Daily Evening Telegraph of 1879 or of Chris Brown’s (2006) illustrations in the contemporary title *Chief Hawah’s Book of Native American Indians*. The trail of missing the mark must end. Native Americans are living, thriving cultures that deserve the respect of American classrooms. Until teacher preparation programs take responsibility for educating pre-service teachers in basic native studies, it will remain the responsibility of all American educators to seek out accurate resources and information that will put an end to the racism. Teachers must realize their own potential in the art room. We can open the world for exploration and not silence the voices of different cultures by censoring them from our curriculum.

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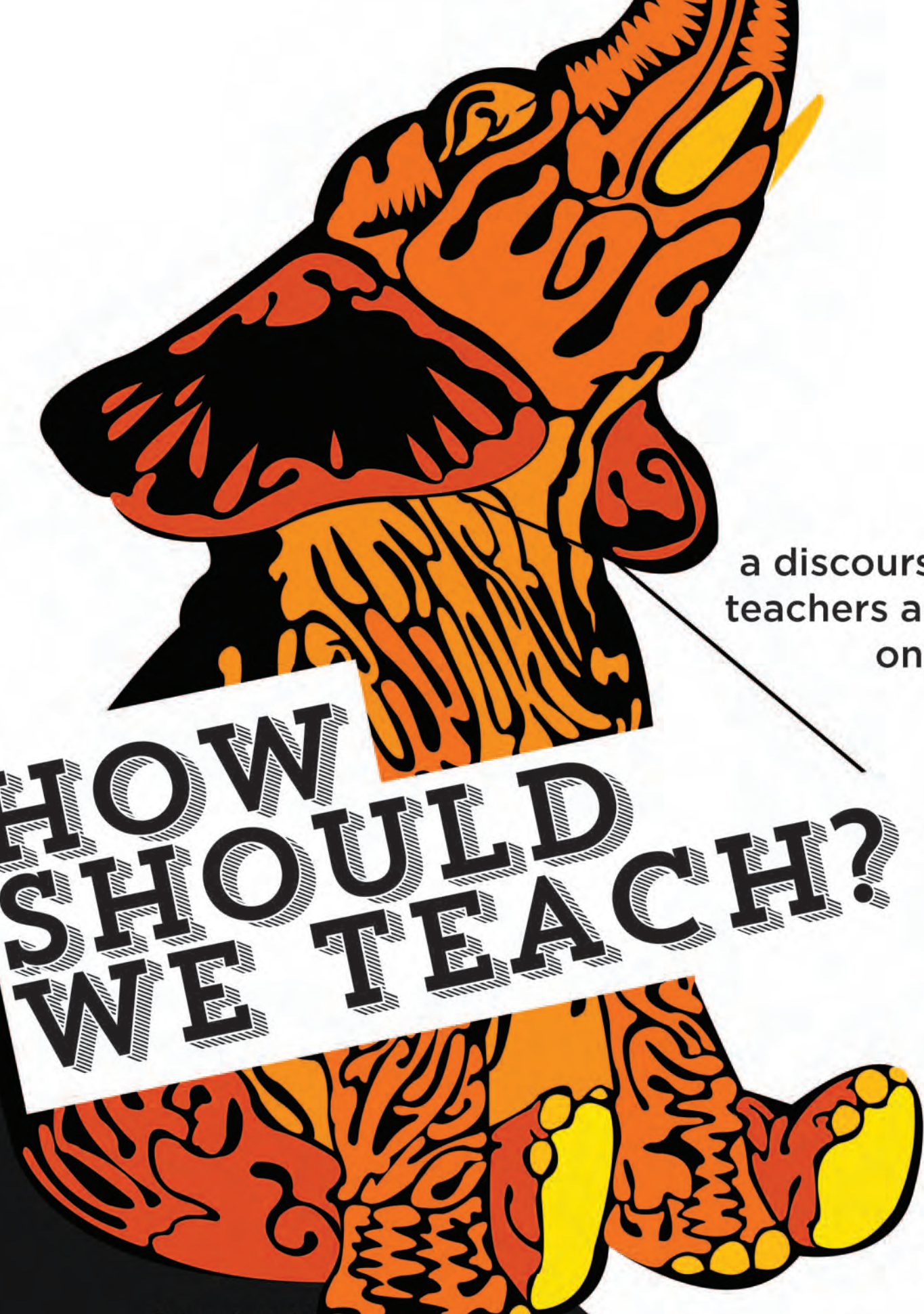
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a discourse among
teachers and artists
on teaching

HOW
SHOULD
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illustration by Jacob Bloom

SHOSHANNA SITON

HOW SHOULD WE TEACH? A DISCOURSE AMONG TEACHERS AND ARTISTS ON TEACHING

by Shoshanna Siton

Keywords: qualitative research, learning environment, creativity, & constructivism

Introduction

The art syllabi in Israel's schools include the theoretical study of art history as well as creative workshops. On the websites of many schools these workshops are described as a place in which teachers seek to nurture and encourage "a process of creativity," as they aspire to turn the pupil into an "independent creative artist" (Ministry of Education, 1997, p. 1). The high-school syllabus issued by Israel's Ministry of Education in 1997 portrays the workshop as a location that enables pupils to experience the craft of artistic creation, emphasizing that "imparting practical skills should not be regarded as an end in itself, but rather as a further means of developing the pupils' capacity to discuss a work of art and their critical ability" (Ministry of Education, 1997, pp. 1-2). This presentation of the syllabus' rationale is consistent with a postmodern narrative, and stresses that the guiding principles of the syllabus are derived from the constructivist approach.

Setting such objectives raises several fundamental questions not only regarding the art syllabus, but regarding any syllabus in general. Among these are the following:

- What is the meaning of the concepts "creative person," and "independent creator" (Schweitzer, 2009, p.2)?
- How can teachers nurture the pupil's creativity?
- How can one develop pupils' capacity for critical thinking?
- Can the principles of the constructivist approach promote the development of a creative, independent, and critical person?

Gardner (2006) points out that an art syllabus, as any other, addresses complex concepts and intricate problems that require discussion, feedback, and reflection; hence the great importance of art teaching and its long-term effect on pupils' individual modes of thinking and expression. Eisner (1991) asserts further that the artist's mode of operation demonstrates the essence of quality in the most concise and condensed manner. Educational critique of syllabi in the field of art teaching may thus contribute to an improvement in art teaching and lead to conclusions regarding the strengths and weaknesses of syllabi in general. In defining the concept "syllabus," Eisner is referring to a comprehensive educational critique that takes into account the various objectives of the syllabus and the topics taught within it, as well as pedagogical issues such as teaching style and the role of skills and the pupil's creativity and self-expression. This inclusive perception of a syllabus likewise takes account of the community's values and economic circumstances.

My interest in the issue of the prescribed methods of teaching in school art workshops led me to conduct a qualitative study among practitioners who teach both children and adults. These artist-teachers have never undergone formal teacher training, yet are nevertheless considered to be good teachers. They have developed teaching methods anchored in a clear educational philosophy that rests on intuition, life experience, and individual ideology. This study seeks to trace and learn about the teaching methods employed by these artists, and to determine to what extent they are congruent with postmodernist discourse and with constructivist theory. A further question addressed here is whether the conclusions drawn by this study may generate recommendations pertaining to teaching methods that are generally desirable in any syllabus.



Art Education

Teaching methods in the Western world and in Israel have undergone gradual change over the past two decades. This is manifested in the adoption of an inclusive educational perception that views the pupil, the teacher, and the subject matter as components of a multicultural social whole. The teacher is a legitimate interpreter, creator and even translator of the subject matter taught, while the latter constitutes a means of developing individual, social, and civic awareness. This is part of the postmodern approach that assumes that one cannot engage in formal teaching if one does not recognize its social and environmental implications (Neperud, 1995).

These transformations in the field of education have generated a different perspective on art education as well. Postmodernist discourse maintains that the language of art is a part of the semiotic systems that make up society. The significance of art is bound up with the multidimensional social network, and as such is context dependent. The questions about how language represents, dictates, limits, or delimits meaning and how we endeavour to attain control by means of it, can likewise be asked about art. These questions examine how 'we' are defined by the language of art within historical, social, and cultural matrices against the backdrop of differences of race, nation, class, ethnic affiliation, age, gender, and sexual identity (Neperud 1995).

Postmodernism assumes that creative activity is a vital part of human existence. Art is not regarded as something detached from the world, but rather as a sphere that reflects the spirit of the times. This is a multi-layered, multicultural, and democratic view that broadens the boundaries of consensus by abolishing the distinction between high and low culture and by empowering the individual creative artist, in the belief that art is produced by everyone, and not exclusively by the individualistic and exceptionally talented artist. Teaching art in schools thus plays an important role in fostering and developing the pupil's abilities, which are natural gifts possessed by everyone: the capacity for creative expression; the ability to see the aesthetic elements in the world; and the capacity to express one's individual feelings, thoughts, and wishes (Eisner 1991). Art is perceived as a language that contains aesthetic rules that can be taught to anyone. Artistic language employs metaphorical expression or any other use of symbolism that calls attention to attributes related to sound and structure. Artistic language serves as a means to express forms of intelligence. The individual and/or culture determine whether to utilize a certain form of intelligence through the language of art. The individual is free to decide whether to employ their linguistic intelligence as an author, a poet, a lawyer, a salesperson, or as an orator. Spatial intelligence may likewise be aesthetically used by a sculptor, or utilized in a non-artistic manner by the engineer or the surgeon. Similarly, a musical note can serve a non-artistic function, such as a military trumpet call, while different patterns devised for mathematical purposes may find themselves displayed in an art gallery (Gardner, 2006).

A pupil engaged in creative activity must learn to employ multiple types of thinking: creative, playful, intuitive, and emotional thinking alongside rational and deliberate thinking that can be learned according to clear criteria. Artistic creation begins as a type of game, which resembles a children's game of imagining. According to Winnicott (1971), in its initial stages this game is intuitive, lacking form or structure. After this early, intuitive stage, the pupil engages in a process of crystallizing the materials and the content into a communicative work of art that possesses attributes and structure, which both the creator and the external audience can understand and in which they can find meaning. This is the place to apply critical thinking directed at personal clarification, during which the pupils ask themselves what they wish to express and then decide on the style and technique appropriate to their statement. To this end they can utilize current technology, such as computer drawings, digital artwork, graphics, video, and photography.

Engagement in art frequently leads the pupil to look deep into their soul and facilitates an encounter with their feelings and with those of their fellows. Art mirrors the soul of the pupil. It enables them to express negative feelings and emotional states such as anxiety, confusion, crisis, or depression (Schweitzer 2009). Pupils require educational guidance and direction that channels their individual search and the encounter with their inner life. They must learn that self-reflection and self-expression are important activities that they are able to perform, without fear of hurting themselves or infringing their own or their fellows' privacy (Gardner 2006).

In light of the above, it is clear that the teacher plays a vital role in art education. He or she does not engage in laying down rules of artistic taste or in artistic judgment but facilitates dialogue about alternative perspectives. Art teaching requires a fruitful combination of several areas: knowledge of art content; technical knowledge; an ability to read the pupils and their moods at a given moment; the skill to preserve the inner motivation that stems from pupils' genuine enthusiasm about engaging in art; an understanding of creative processes; the ability to communicate and build trust; the ability to shape an environment

conducive to artistic creation; and a capacity for conceptualization. The art teacher must furthermore be aware that teachers' actions are intrinsically political in nature. Every choice of an approach anchored in a certain discipline, of a certain socio-cultural approach, or of any approach whatsoever, is essentially an ideological decision, and every action taken on the strength of an ideological choice is necessarily a political act.



Developing Creativity Through the Inspiration of Constructivism

Jaffe (2002), the inspector of art education in Israel, recommends that the art teacher build a syllabus that rests upon the principles of constructivism. She believes that these principles are particularly suited to the theoretical and practical study of all types of art.

The constructivist approach maintains that human knowledge accumulates as a result of the trials, experiences, and mistakes of people who conduct a process of interpretation and allocation of individual meaning to everything that occurs in their daily environment. Knowledge, in other words, is built up in the learner through an active process of involvement and maintaining mutual relations with their human and physical environment. The human learning process comprises three main parts: the cognitive, the emotional, and the meta-cognitive. The cognitive component involves finding and creating links between existing and new knowledge and applying knowledge. The emotional component of learning includes finding challenges, maintaining motivation and self-assurance, taking pride in the results, and enjoying the creative process. The meta-cognitive component involves prior planning, setting

out a schedule, analysis of difficulties and failures, and assessment of the results.

According to this approach, learning is an active process, and the objective of study in schools is therefore 'to learn how to learn,' namely, to study not merely facts, but also modes of thinking and systematic processes that promote problem solving. Since the important skills, according to this approach, include the ability to understand and explain our actions, to think critically and to solve problems, the teaching methods appropriate to this approach should take account of the environmental conditions in which the child grows up and in particular the conditions at school. The pupils' environments must be enriching and challenging, yet at the same time realistic and relevant to the world of the learners. They should facilitate group work and dialogue that exposes them to a variety of perspectives and fosters self-awareness of the process of knowledge construction. All this should be part of the attempt to base learning at school on authentic study, critical thinking, and fruitful



collaboration among pupils.

The good teacher, according to this view, is perceived as an agent of conceptual change, as a guide, and a stalwart of a joint community of learners suited to active and independent pupils who are constantly stimulating and challenging one another (Brooks & Brooks, 1993; Perkins, 1999).

The Research

This is a qualitative study. The research tools employed were a semi-structured interview and observations of lessons. The research population included five well-known Israeli artists (see Figures 1-5) who engage in the following fields: pottery, painting, dance, music, and children's literature. All the interviewees are creative artists as well as highly experienced teachers, and have established a reputation in their field. Since they did not undergo pedagogical training, they developed their teaching methods on their own. The interview commenced with a question about the process whereby they had established their educational philosophy. This was followed by a question asking why, in their view, they are considered to be good teachers. The replies to these two questions raised three main points: the importance of creating a good and liberating atmosphere in

the studio as a condition for fostering creativity among the pupils; the manner of offering sincere and encouraging feedback to pupils; and the nature of the relationships between the teacher and the pupils and among the pupils themselves.

A. The process whereby the artist-teachers developed their educational philosophy

Kadmor: In the beginning I thought [I should teach] the way they [my former teachers] taught me...as time passed I realized that this was not good [...] the happiness element began to lead my thought. I begin by thinking about what the pupil needs, and why has he come to me?

Lalush: I arrived at teaching by chance [...] [My] method developed as I went along. I had no well-defined method from the outset. I thought it was right to work with their [the students'] ability, their direction, even if there was a total lack of knowledge. Through belief, imagination, and encouragement – in a year's time, [I hope to] know more and more [...].

Gelbart-Avni: During the initial years I thought that I had to bombard [students] with stimuli, and I didn't trust myself or them. I would bring them objects, sounds, and take the children outside. I gradually noticed that I was reducing objects and that [their inspiration and motivation] was all in their heads, and one doesn't need to leave the room. One can produce the greatest stimuli through words, without any instrumental aids.

Elkayam: I began teaching in a school while I was studying [...] I taught by instinct and intuition the things that I liked and that interested me [...] Over the years my teaching improved [...] It took me a long while to develop a method [...] My goal is satisfaction and elation for everyone, [as well as] the spiritual exultation among the dancers for whom this has done something. Something new that they have experienced. The important thing is that they discover something.

Dvir: I learned to play the flute on my own. My parents had no money. I learned by ear from the radio. Without notes. [...] I began to teach without knowledge [...] I developed the method when I taught myself to play. That worked for me and is now working for my pupils.

B. Responses to the question: What, in your opinion, is the most important element in the teaching process?

All the artist-teachers note the importance of creating a good and liberated atmosphere in the studio.

Kadmor: I tell [students] that they must experience things and therefore there are always surprises. They don't copy what they find in books. I tell them that I don't know it all. They discover new things. There is something new under the sun. I give them great freedom but also knowledge [and encourage them to] try doing it like this or that. The pupils also make suggestions to one another [...] We all collaborate. It's an experiment station. The place liberates them. They receive legitimacy for their works.

Lalush: The key to good work is that [students] feel free [...] I don't touch the works. I show them the technical aspects or how a certain artist worked according to the schools that we have studied, so that they'll

understand. I am patient [...] One must impart to the pupil and accept [their responses] [...] I respect them and that reflects from one to another [...] There is a family feeling in the studio, that contributes to the work [...]. I don't demand payment for the whole year in advance. My financial approach is anchored in my educational worldview.

Gelbart-Avni: What does the workshop try to achieve? To free the obstructions and to give written expression to what you have in your head [...]. I give [them] a task and then [suggest they] go follow their heart. [Students] don't have to adapt [their ideas] to me. There is no right [way] or wrong one. Spelling mistakes don't bother me. In the initial years I don't bother with structure, beginning, middle, and end [...] [Instead], they write joyfully.

Elkayam: There are important things that I decided I wanted to teach

and to give the pupil tools to build a work and not [focus solely on] technique. That's what is closest to my heart and something that I do with love and



FIGURE 1 Rachel Kadmor (ceramicist).

FIGURE 2 Victor Lalush (artist).

FIGURE 3 Ofra Gelbart-Avni (author/editor).

FIGURE 4 Oshra Elkayam (dancer/choreographer).

FIGURE 5 Ya'akov Dvir (musician).

in totality. From the syllabus I go off on adventures [...].

Dvir: Studying requires a good atmosphere. The social aspect of playing [within] the group is very important. It is also a social occasion but I make sure that it's serious, so the concerts are very important. They maintain the tension and the standard [to encourage] external recognition.

C. The issue of providing feedback to the pupils occupies the artist-teachers a great deal. How does one provide credible and constructive feedback that respects the pupil?

Kadmor: My guiding principle is that everyone is able [...] of course, the results are different. There are so many possibilities, and everyone develops in their own way [...] With me, there is no competition. The person is free and is entirely detached from the herd [...] in their own right. They like different things. [I] don't [want students to] be rigid, because there are so many wonderful results.

Lalush: I am the artist who guides them. I see this as educationally rewarding work, to educate toward beauty, aesthetics, but first of all toward creativity. Irrespective of the level, I grasp the little positive there



is, even if it's minute, I explain to them and in time they understand on their own [...] a matter of fact critique of all work. [I believe that] criticism benefits everyone, and students absorb something of the explanation [...]. I guide the pupils in how to critique and how to accept criticism [...] There are rules that can be dispensed with at a certain stage, and there are new rules [...] There is no rejection.

Gelbart-Avni: The children read their works aloud. Only those who wish to, there is no obligation. I invite the children to criticize. I too criticize, but I always say: "This is your work. Do whatever you like with it. There are no constraints." [...] I never criticize in front of the group. The goal is to illuminate [things] for them as if with a projector. [...] I'm against re-writing, because they will internalize the remarks and will use them in future [...] Over all these years no child has ever insulted another through criticism. Sometimes their remarks are extremely important [...] as soon as someone dares, this liberates the others as well.

Elkayam: When I teach or create I don't come with a set plan but with ideas that flesh out during the process. In this type of creation the dancer must have imagination, and creativity. I toss a stone into the water and the pupils have to make the waves.

Dvir: I believe that most people are able to play, and someone who has a sense of rhythm can do it. If someone makes a mistake, I work with them separately to help them. The pupil can continue to develop on their own according to my method and practise at home.

D. The system of reciprocal relations between teacher and pupils and among the pupils

Kadmor: The atmosphere created in the studio is open. The works change and new ideas emerge. There are endless opportunities. The pupils sense this, and it interests me and renews me. It flows along as a shared adventure [...] where there are no secrets. We develop from previous knowledge. Not everyone needs to begin everything from scratch. Each individual adds a layer until [...] it all flows like the flow of blood in the body, so that there are no blockages that kill us.

Lalush: There are various levels [of abilities] among several pupils. There is no copying allowed. Several pupils make a positive contribution through their work and understanding [...] When I look back, I have learned about myself through teaching, through the pupils, through the explanations, about how to reach the desired result as I see it [...].

Gelbart-Avni: I ask, "What does a workshop mean? What does one do in a workshop?" One sees the seams, the screws, and one is therefore allowed to show others the blemishes. Everyone learns from this. We have a book of ideas generated by the children. [...] The book lies on my table and I ask them to write in it. Anyone can open it, and find an idea for writing.

Elkayam: I find it important to search for new things, to find new things through dance, to discover something [that allows for individual] expression. Working with the students, I see what they do and get ideas for what comes next. My line of thought develops if one of the dancers arrives at an unexpected point [...] it is constantly evolving into something new and flowering. There is give and take here, a never-ending cycle.

Dvir: The good pupils pull the group upward [...] and they get along well in a heterogeneous group. During the lesson each instrumentalist has to be alert, as the playing has to be done in a group. In the theatre you can improvise but here precision is demanded.

DISCUSSION

The artist-teachers who participated in this study talk about their educational philosophy, which dictates their educational objectives, teaching methods, and the outcomes they expect. All these stem from their worldview, which has crystallized over time and is linked to their calling as artists. As creative artists they require personal freedom, independence of thought, and fruitful interaction with other artists. Their life experience as students, having studied under different teachers –

some of whom were renowned artists – forms them as teachers. Describing their time as pupils, they express deep appreciation for their teachers, from whom they acquired much knowledge. Yet, at the same time, they look back with a clear-minded and critical gaze.

The fact that they have not acquired formal education in teaching has liberated them from dogmatic thinking on the one hand, but has, on the other hand, demanded of them individual thinking and examination, both with regard to the process of shaping and formulating their educational objectives, and in choosing the ways and means through which to achieve these goals. Eisner (1991) makes a case for studying the unique and the personal. He maintains that the attempt to learn through the similarities in people's lives and experiences helps the scholar to understand the research subject and to develop empathy toward them.

Discussion of the responses of the artist-teachers is, therefore, also a discussion of the advantages and drawbacks of the currently widely accepted constructivist syllabus in art, and of the manner in which it approaches classical topics in the field of aesthetics, such as the role of technique, creativity, and self-expression in the process of artistic creation. This is likewise a discussion of pedagogy: the process of constructing new knowledge, utilizing the inner motivation that stems from the real enthusiasm of pupils engaged in art, and of the question of pupil feedback. Discussion of all these topics is linked to the ethical dilemmas faced by the art teacher in the postmodern period: the ability to respect the individual pupil's views and values, recognition of cultural variation, inculcating aesthetic values at a time when we are questioning accepted premises and beliefs in the field of art, abolition of the distinction between high and low culture, and acceptance of the artistic expressions of the 'other' (Neperud 2004). This study thus offers a different perspective on the existing syllabus; an observation that enables us to identify several points that reinforce currently accepted perceptions, while at the same time exposing and emphasizing what they lack.

One may, accordingly, maintain that these principles oblige us to expand the circle of those who engage in art and to include every pupil in it. This educational approach appreciates the pupil's individual voice and their personal self-expression. Workshops for creative writing, music, painting, sculpture and dance should, therefore, constitute part of the syllabus of every pupil in the school. They should not be reserved for small groups of pupils who have chosen a particular stream of study within the school.

A further issue that emerges from this study is the attitude toward the perception of new knowledge construction as a process of joint learning by pupils and teacher. This perception forms a central strand in constructivist theory. All the artist-teachers indeed adhere to this view and act accordingly. Yet they also note that the process of knowledge construction must rest upon the firm foundation of an appropriate educational milieu. A climate of freedom, in which the pupil is free of fears and pressure, is a necessary condition in their eyes. All the artist-teachers report that they devote considerable thought to this aspect and take pains to create the conditions conducive to its generation. Moreover, they all stress that over time, as they matured and acquired teaching experience, they have increasingly come to appreciate the importance of this factor. It appears that constructivist theories fail to address this issue. Professional literature and syllabi provide detailed descriptions of the desirable process whereby new knowledge should be constructed but fail to anchor this process in a clear and firm stipulation to the effect that the teacher should first of all make sure to create an educational infrastructure that includes a supportive and enabling educational atmosphere as a major component of the process.

Teachers and teacher trainers in general, and not merely in the arts, should be aware of the requirement that the creation of a positive, accepting, and liberating atmosphere in class is an important addition to the principles of constructivist theory. The process of constructing new knowledge, which requires free and creative thinking, will never occur in a location that suppresses the experimenting child as they feel their way forward and search for themselves.

CONCLUSION

In Israel, the current syllabus and teaching methods are founded on the constructivist approach. Educational policymakers and teacher trainers have adopted these approaches as their basic premises, and are bestowing them on the future generation of teachers. This study examined these premises by taking a different perspective on the process of art education with the help of artist-teachers who teach art to children, adolescents, and adults, and who have received no formal teacher training. These artist-teachers have crystallized their own educational philosophy and teaching methods through their understanding of the way in which artists operate and by taking a critical view of the educational process and teaching methods that they experienced as art students in various educational institutions.

It transpires that the educational philosophy and the teaching methods employed by the artist-teachers accord with the principles of the constructivist concept. This finding can considerably reinforce current educational practice and indicates to those engaged in teacher training that they are on the right track. Nevertheless, the artist-teachers add a principle, which they perceive to be central to their teaching methods. It also plays no part in the principles of the constructivist approach. Familiar with the process whereby the individual artist develops, they draw our attention to the conditions in which artists grow and develop. In their view, the process whereby a pupil acquires new knowledge while developing their personality as an independent creator must take place within an accepting and encouraging educational environment that enables artistic experience. All the respondents go to considerable effort to fashion and maintain such an environment. While to those engaged in education this statement may perhaps seem unremarkable, all those who participated in the study noted that such an environment did not always exist in the formal art education institutions at which they studied. On the contrary, both in their capacity as students and teachers they have come across teachers who created such a critical milieu as to emasculate and silence the pupils.

All the artist-teachers furthermore noted that engaging in art for art's sake was one of their educational objectives. This goal is linked to their perception of artistic expression and its role in the life of the individual. Engaging in art develops pupils' creativity, their awareness of themselves, and their capacity for articulation and self-expression. These skills are all part of the individual, original, and creative thinking required of every individual. Art classes should therefore be part of the syllabus of every schoolchild as well as part of the way of life of every individual.

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BLOGGING CONNECTIONS

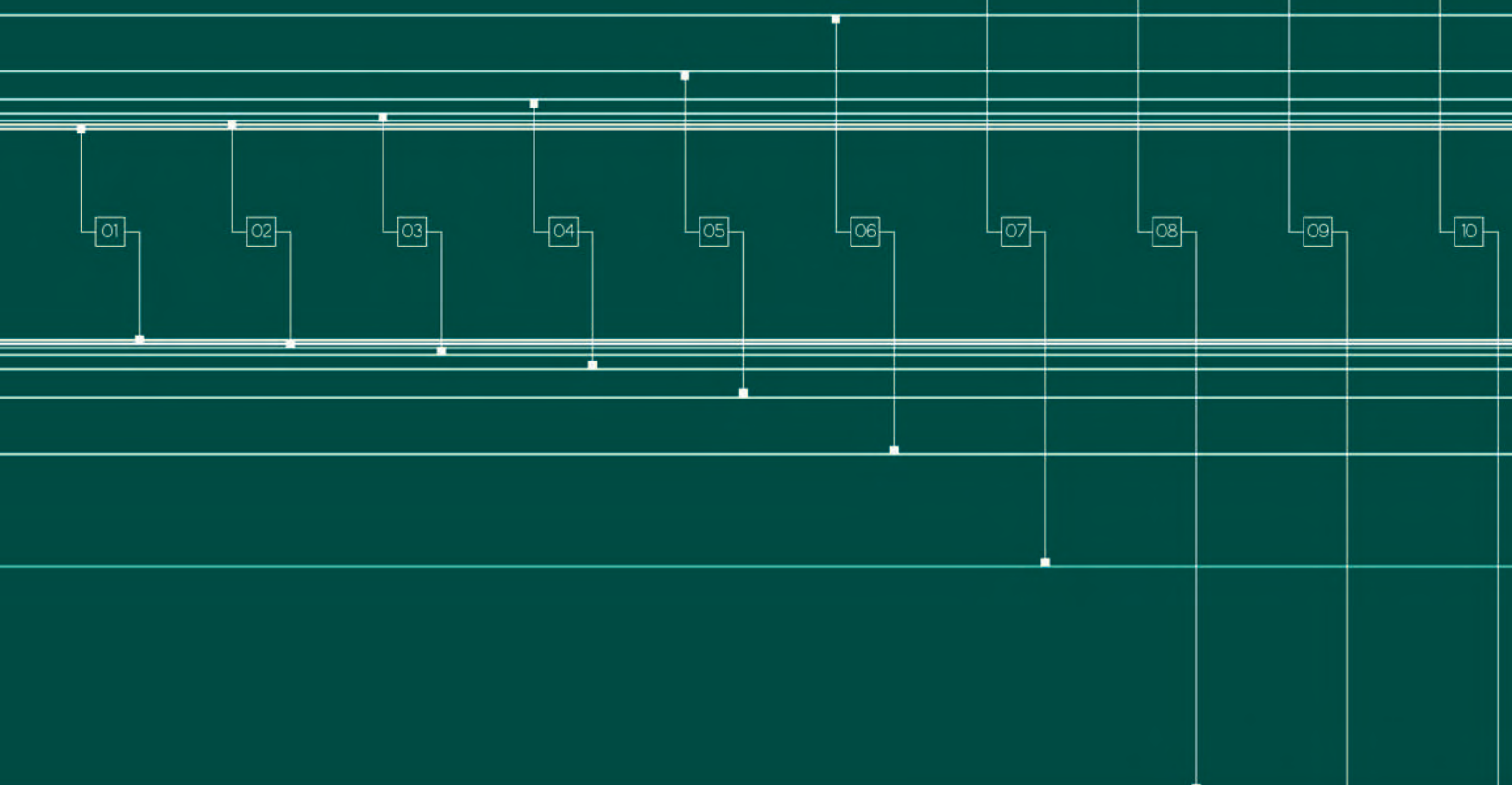


illustration by Dustin Hall

ELIZABETH SUTTON

BLOGGING CONNECTIONS

by Elizabeth Sutton

Keywords: Blogs, Art History, & Connectivism

Blogging can contribute to a quality learning experience for students of global art history. Theories of constructivism, connectivism, and dialogue in virtual learning environments (VLEs) were used to design and integrate blogs into an undergraduate *Arts of Africa* course. The objectives for the blogs were to provide an autonomous space for students to critically interact with each other, course content, and the instructor as they reflected upon and analyzed African art and their own perceptions of it. Pre- and post-course surveys measured students' awareness of their learning gains in these domains (thinking and reading critically; deconstructing and articulating complex ideas; making connections between course content and life). Blogs used as a learning tool are applicable to a variety of courses and are particularly useful for courses that engage content that is culturally distant for a North American student. In the *Arts of Africa* course, blogs enhanced student awareness of their own preconceptions and biases about Africa and provided an alternative to simplistic approaches to teaching African history and visual culture.

Integrating multicultural perspectives in art history has lately been identified as the most significant methodological problem facing the discipline (Belting, 2009; Elkins, 2011, 2006). George Sefa Dei (2010), while not explicitly concerned with art history, calls for an anti-colonial pedagogical approach to African history and historiography, one that rejects romanticism and claims to "authenticity," instead seeking multiple voices and critical questioning to construct knowledge about Africa in a globalized world. This rejection of unilateralism implicates both content and pedagogy, and Dei (2010) advocates an "indigenous" approach to teaching and learning by using collaboration, among other tools such as story-telling and use of oral sources (p. xxii). Similarly, "listening to your own voice and that of others" has been marked as critical to developing a "multicultural attitude that is both sensitive to, and appreciative of, cultural diversity" (Turniansky, Tuval, Mansur, Barak, & Gidron, 2009, p. 39).

There is a problem teaching African art to students who are not African, by a teacher who is not African. There is all too great a tendency to fall into culturally comfortable modes of interpretation without awareness of the privilege that interpretation belies. A critical approach to the study of visual objects categorized in North America and Europe as "African" and their intersection with history can and should be used to prompt students' awareness of cultural discourse on the construction of power and privilege, and their own place within such a structured society (Bahru, 2011; Dei, 2012; Kroll, 2008). Jacqueline Chanda (1992a, 1992b, 1993) has especially advocated the need to address latent power assumptions in the pedagogical approach to African art by educators in North America by drawing attention to terminology used and the importance of taking a comparative and contextualized approach to interpretation of non-Western art. It is the aim of this article to show how blogs created by undergraduate students in an *Arts of Africa* course enhance student engagement with material that may be culturally distanced from them, encourage them to question their own belief systems, and help them to develop sensitivity towards cultural diversity. This case study also contributes to design-oriented scholarship on connectivism and dialogue by describing how to encourage higher-order and cognitive processing in collaborative virtual learning environments.

Methodology

The dialogic and connectivist theories of Freire (2000), Ravenscroft (2000, 2007, 2011), Siemens (2005, 2006), and Wegerif (2006) provided the rationale to create the blogging assignment. Freire's (2000)

belief that "only dialogue, which requires critical thinking, is also capable of generating critical thinking" was foundational to building the blog assignment to align with course objectives (p. 92). Following Freire's (2000) belief that dialogue and reflection are necessary for an individual to truly learn, blogs were meant to provide students with ownership of their learning about African art. Ravenscroft (2007, 2011), Siemens (2005, 2006), and Wegerif (2006) have more recently discussed the role the Internet can play in using dialogue to structure and promote learning.

Despite numerous studies that have shown how creative, constructivist, connectivist, and experiential approaches enhance learning (Downes, 2005, 2006; Fosnot, 2005; Gagnon, 2001; Jeffrey & Woods, 2009; Moon, 2004; Ravenscroft, 2011; Siemens, 2005, 2006; Wilson, 1996), only a few art historians have investigated integrative and interactive learning in art history courses (Chanda & Basinger, 2000; Lindner, 2005; Rose & Torosyan, 2009) or to consider how to use the Internet as a pedagogical tool (Giuntini, 2012; Prevo, 2012). John Dewey (1938) is well known for articulating that an effective learning experience requires interaction and continuity of interaction, and these ideas have been updated for the technologically saturated twenty-first century. Downes (2006) and others have argued for the integration of networked technology for teaching and learning because of its potential to provide a continuous, dynamic, and diverse discourse (Ravenscroft, 2011; Siemens, 2005).

As Downes (2006) notes:

Learning... occurs in communities, where the practice of learning is the participation in the community. A learning activity is, in essence, a conversation undertaken between the learner and other members of the community. This conversation, in the web 2.0 era, consists not only of words but also of images, video, multimedia and more. This conversation forms a rich tapestry of resources, dynamic and interconnected, created not only by experts but also by all members of the community, including learners. (p.14)

Similarly, the Internet provides an autonomous space for learners. Following Freire (2000), Jeffrey and Woods (2009) have suggested that important factors in creative, engaged learning include relevance, control, ownership, and innovation. Ravenscroft and Boyle (2010) have suggested that designing for deep learning requires the reconfiguration of "pedagogical processes within more participative and collaborative engagements that are focused on particular contexts" (n.p.). The Internet, and blogging specifically, can provide a context that supports these qualities (Penrod, 2007).

While some studies have identified challenges to creating online learning communities that engage higher-order thinking (Wegerif, 2006; Wilkinson & Barlow, 2010), many others have promoted the Internet as a useful tool to be harnessed in the pursuit of connectivity and dialogue for deeper learning (Downes, 2005, 2006; Ravenscroft, 2007; Ravenscroft, Sagar, Bauer, & Oriogun, 2009; Siemens, 2005, 2006). Indeed, as Ravenscroft (2007) noted, "[d]igital learning technologies can mediate, catalyze, and amplify fundamental human communicative processes in the pursuit of deep learning" (p. 463). A connectivist approach suggests that technology empowers students via the distributive nature of the web (Downes, 2006; Siemens, 2005). Connectivism is driven by the understanding that new information is continually being acquired, reaffirming Dewey's notion that learning is continuous, cumulative, and changing. The ability to draw distinctions between important and unimportant information is vital, and it is through dialectic that this information is refined and becomes a meaningful dialogue (Ravenscroft, 2000, 2011; Ravenscroft & Boyle, 2010; Ravenscroft & McAlister, 2008; Ravenscroft & Pilkington, 2000; Ravenscroft, Sagar et. al, 2009; Wegerif, 2006, 2007).

The blog assignment was designed for a 2011 *Arts of Africa* undergraduate course in order to assist students' personal construction

of knowledge, writing, and critical thinking skills and to assess their fulfillment of course objectives, based on the skills demonstrated in the blogs, and their growth throughout the course. Course objectives included:

- Analyze the visual material using relevant terminology
- Explain the significance of works in their cultural context
- Explain key themes of historical African visual culture and contemporary issues
- Evaluate selections of written primary and secondary historical sources
- Synthesize key themes and issues

Weekly blog prompts engaged content presented in class or in text, and a rubric aligned with course objectives provided a structure to prevent simplistic reflection or unsuccessful dialogue (Ravenscroft, 2000; Ravenscroft & McAlister, 2008; Ravenscroft, Sagar et. al, 2009; Wegerif, 2006).

Structured prompts promoted meaningful dialogue in a public, online environment. Various studies have investigated how dialogue can enhance students’ critical reflection and reconsideration of self-image (Ravenscroft 2000, 2007, 2011; Ravenscroft & Boyle, 2010; Ravenscroft & McAlister, 2008). It has been recognized that in many learning contexts, students’ preconceptions can impede development of understanding and criticality, and that these “alternative conceptions” need to be discussed and argued for students to refine their prior beliefs (Ravenscroft, 2000; Ravenscroft & Pilkington, 2000; Wegerif, 2006). Challenging students by reflecting inquiries back onto the learner facilitates conceptual change (Ravenscroft, 2000; Ravenscroft & Pilkington, 2000). Blogs provided a public, collaborative and non-adversarial virtual space of inquiry. Adherents to connectivist pedagogy have identified the significance of this kind of public knowledge creation, or “knowing publically,” where the “failure to know publicly carries a greater risk [than personal ignorance]: that of not being considered to be a part of the knowing community, of being, therefore, excluded from its interactions, and of being misunderstood when attempting to communicate” (Downes, 2004, p.14).

Blogs began as a reflective space and allowed students to admit unfamiliarity with cultures other than their own. The significance of using blogs to reflect on content then allowed for communal knowledge creation and knowledge checks by peers and instructor. The interlocution of others prompts further analysis, and blogs thereby provided a virtual space where “words and voices can cross the boundary of the self so that students can learn to speak in new ways and be new people” (Wegerif, 2006, p.59).

Surveys taken at the beginning and end of the course suggest students’ initial self-awareness and their perception of their learning and critical thinking skills at the end of the course. To measure students’ perceptions of their learning, I used the Student Assessment of Learning Gains (SALG) online survey in the first week of the course and at the course’s completion (<http://www.salgsite.org>). The same survey was used for both assessments.

The Blogs

I presented students with the blog assignment at the beginning of the semester, and I spent the second class leading students through the set of blogs through blogger.com. I created a model blog on which I posted the prompt for each week and links to all the students’ individual blog sites (<http://www.artsof africa2011.blogspot.com>). Students were required to post their blog urls on a common wiki on the course Blackboard site. To protect privacy, students were not required to include their names anywhere on their blogs. Students were required to post their blogs by Friday and comment on one of their peers’ blogs by the following Monday night. Weekly, I commented on each student’s blog. I also provided holistic commentary on my model blog and in class.

Questions that I posed on my model blog and in class prompted students to critically engage the readings, lecture, and class discussion in their blogs. While guiding students to consider course themes and objectives, prompts also allowed students to add and relate new material to the themes. The class blog provided a venue for holistic comments directed to all students. After particularly thoughtful posts, I praised the class. Sometimes it was also necessary to write critical comments related to mechanics, editing, and misconceptions and provide better models.

The continuous dialogue of blogging fostered interpersonal connections among students, connections between student and content, and in so doing, helped facilitate student self-awareness. The blog provided a virtual learning space for student autonomy and creativity and was a space where multiple voices could be heard. Students could access and share with each other a diverse assortment of supporting or refuting evidence for their own blogs, in response to others’ blogs, and in response to content from class. Some examples follow.

In their blogs, many students remarked that the perspective on the reading or class discussion provided by their peers gave them insight they had not previously considered. Some students suggested ways in which their peers could further develop the ideas presented. These kinds of comments helped students develop logical arguments—sometimes in agreement and sometimes presenting an alternative point of view to their classmates’. In so doing, they created meaning dialogically. Examples below from the blogs written by Katy, Helen, Kerry, Lisa, Kevin, and Krista exemplify how blogs facilitated this process.

Each week I reviewed students’ blogs and commented on each briefly, generally by asking the student questions. Often my questions sought clarification and attempted to draw out the omissions, assumptions, and biases that may have been implicit in the student’s language and supplemental images or other interactive media. I also reviewed peer comments. Many of the peer comments raised critical questions, which allowed me to become more observer than instructor-interlocutor.

Connections and Perceptions

Many students used their blogs to reflect upon and develop their thinking about ideas their peers presented during in-class discussion. Katy noted in a blog about readings discussed in class “it was interesting to see how the people in my group had similar, but also very different thoughts.” Two of her peers continued the discussion in their commentary and added critical insights to the ongoing discussion. In another case, Helen commented on Kerry’s blog about masquerades and wrote that she “enjoyed how you went further with the question your group got in class. When you talked about represented vs. embodied I did get a better understanding of the meanings.” Helen benefited from reading her peer’s blog, and Kerry used her blog to continue thinking about and reflecting upon questions and issues that had been presented in class.

Students consistently demonstrated their reconsideration of self and of what they thought they knew in their blogs. Katy reflected on her own preconceptions coming into the course in one of her last blogs for the class:

I will admit, when I first began this class, I thought of the continent of Africa as safaris and people in poverty. So seeing this quote [“I’ve never actually been to an African village, I’ve only seen one on television.” From a transcribed interview with artist Yinka Shonibare] really opens my eyes on how uneducated and judgmental I was, which then makes me think of how others look at me.

Lisa too, used her blog to reflect on how class content and discussion changed her perceptions. “I found the discussion of how Africa is thought of as a whole rather than the various cultures found within it to be intriguing mainly because it is how I had thought of it before this class.”

She continued even further, making the critical move of assessing herself through someone else’s perspective:

This raises questions in my mind. . .about what it would be like to be among a minority, or to be surrounded by people expecting certain things of me based on their assumption of my background. . . How oblivious or limited are we regarding our expectations and perceptions of cultures outside our own?

Lisa’s reflections prompted additional insights from two of her peers, both of whom admitted to having held similar assumptions. Kevin was particularly adept at providing cross-cultural comparisons that made the material presented in class relevant for him and for his peers. Many of his classmates commented specifically that “they hadn’t thought of that” and saw the similarities between the examples Kevin provided and the issues raised by the readings. For example, Kevin brought up hybridity in music, relating his example to assigned articles that presented intercultural visual phenomena in West Africa. Kevin wrote:

Since our class yesterday, I have been trying to think of other ways we adapt in our culture today. An example in class that was given was with food. We have taken food from different cultures and then made it our own by fitting it to how we like and enjoy it. Another example that we did not talk about in class that keeps coming to my mind is music. New music is constantly being written all the time, but where does inspiration come from? More often than not, we use ideas from other people and cultures. I see this a lot in collaborations.

After learning about Haitian art and culture, Kevin related what he had learned to his own belief system, and made connections across the material studied thus far:

As a practicing Catholic it is interesting to me that Catholic saints are used in other religions as well. I have not heard of this much before. The way that these saints are handled is intriguing to me because they constantly change. In the Catholic religion these saints stay the same all the time but in Haitian vodou they change to fit the times. This is something I have noticed in other parts of vodou and other African cultures as well.

Kevin made a similar connection to his own cultural systems and institutions by relating age-grade initiation masks and masquerades to Boy Scouting:

I can relate closely to the Ndomo because the way we described it in class was similar to boy scouts. Having gone through boy scouts when I was younger, I understand the importance and need to teach our youth how to grow up to be outstanding citizens. . . It’s so interesting to me to see how much our culture compared with different African Cultures are so different yet, surprisingly to me, so similar.

While Kevin was skillful in making cross-cultural comparisons to relate content from class to his own life, he did not often turn a critical eye towards his own cultural institutions, as had Katy and Lisa.

Krista also was able to critique her own cultural systems. Like Kevin, Krista consistently related material from class to her own life. She often used the online venue to bring in additional material where she could. Many of her blogs included YouTube videos and links to web resources. In one blog, Krista brought in additional material to help support her critique of the readings as well as everyone’s role in society. She linked

contemporary American artist Kara Walker’s works to those by artists we examined in class. Krista wrote:

In writing this week’s blog my mind kept going to a contemporary artist that I find profoundly remarkable. . . .Kara Walker’s work deals with multiple dualities and each one is significant within today’s social and political world. Dominator vs. dominated, black vs. white, good vs. evil, external vs. internal, history vs. story, and male vs. female are all apparent in Walker’s art. . . . People from this class have been educated on the issues these artists face and it’s up to us to decide whether to keep it to ourselves or try to make a difference and teach what we know.

The blogs provide evidence of students’ increased ability to make connections between class material–content that was initially foreign– and their own lives, through the process of an ongoing online dialogue. Through this continuous and collaborative process, students challenged themselves and their peers to become more aware of latent biases and assumptions.

Surveys

Surveys suggested that students began the class with vague or unformed conceptions about African art, but that post-course, students perceived themselves to have developed a wider critical-thinking skill set, were better able to analyze complex arguments, and understood how content related to them personally. While the SALG survey questions were not specific to the blogging assignment, additional student comments underscore the effect of blogging on the gains measured by the SALG. The tables below suggest that students’ perception of their ability to critically address course content increased between pre- and post-course surveys (Table 1). In the “Attitudes” section of the SALG, all students indicated that by the end of the course, they felt at least “somewhat comfortable” if not more so, in working with complex ideas (Table 2). The section of the survey “Integration of Learning” provided insight into students’ recognition of their own deep learning. Student responses indicated that they perceived their habit of “connecting key ideas I learn in my classes with other knowledge” to have increased over the course of the class (Table 3). In comments provided on the post-course survey, students appreciated that they were able “to better critique and look further into understanding situations and items,” and “look at everything, especially art, more critically.” Another student appreciated how the course “opened my eyes to being able to see things from other viewpoints.”

During the final class meeting, I informally asked students to write what they liked and disliked about the blogs. Students recognized that when they made personal connections through blogs, they were able to remember and understand the material better. Constructing their own knowledge through logical reasoning and critical analysis made students’ learning more profound–and enjoyable. As one student wrote about the blog assignment, “I enjoy connecting material in class to real life examples. It helps me better understand the information. ”

Overall, they liked blogging precisely because it gave them the freedom to create their own frames for the material presented in class. Students liked having the opportunity to expand their inquiries beyond the material presented in class and to bring in video and other sources. One student wrote, “We were actually able to expand on topics we found interesting or wanted to know more about.” Another student similarly noted, “I enjoyed the blog because it allowed us to focus on what we found most intriguing rather than exactly what you wanted us to learn. You supply the layout while we get to explore what we enjoyed.” These responses indicate that students appreciated and used the opportunity to take control of their learning as it related to course material.

Students also used their own and each other’s blogs to refine their knowledge without the anxiety of instructor-driven tests. One student wrote, “I felt I learned more doing [blogs] than taking a test because with tests you just have to memorize the material, whereas with the blogs you had to think more thoughtfully about the items.” Another stated, “[Blogs] were very helpful in learning. It was a perfect way to show my understanding of the class and compare it to my classmates as well.” Many students also noted the lasting process of learning through writing. Echoing many of her peers, a student suggested that unlike quizzes and tests, blogs helped her “take more away” from the course. Even a student who wrote that she “hated doing them” acknowledged that the blogs helped her “think/reflect about everything we discussed [in class], which made me remember/learn the material.”

CONCLUSION

The blogs and surveys suggest that blogging promoted the development of critical thinking skills and enhanced students’ awareness of their own biases and preconceptions. In the public space of the Internet, the higher social stakes prompted students to be thoughtful in content and attentive to mechanical details like organization, grammar, and spelling. By reflecting on and responding to others’ reflections, students built relationships between course material and material outside of the classroom and fostered relationships with each other. Through these continuous dialogues, students connected with each other and corrected each other and themselves to engage more critically and be more self-aware with respect to African art. The process of dialogue and reflection helped students be open to correcting and re-forming ideas about art produced by cultures with which they may have had little or no experience. Blogs allowed students to direct the content they explored, and interact with each other, which also helped them perceive their learning positively. Blogs contribute to redefining what learning can look like in the digital age. Using blogs, students created meaning in the social environment of the Internet. Through the process of construction–and reconstruction–of course content on blogs, students engaged with culturally distant and complex material to produce a skill set that will help them participate critically and thoughtfully in a global society.

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illustration by Jacob Bloom

PAUL E. BOLIN & KAELA HOSKINGS

WE DO WHAT WE BELIEVE: A CONTEMPORARY AND HISTORICAL LOOK AT PERSONAL AND PROGRAMMATIC PURPOSES OF ART EDUCATION

by Paul E. Bolin & Kaela Hoskings

Keywords: Contemporary Art, Art Institutions, & Art Programming

All educators carry out their professional practice from a specific point of view. This is true for art educators working within public and private schools, as well as those conveyors of art information who are active in museums and the vast host of community art education sites in the world today. These educators conduct their instructional activities, whether conscious of it or not, from a position that reflects their particular beliefs and purposes. Most of these art educators have considerable latitude and opportunity regarding the art content they impart, as well as how they go about conducting their instructional practice. A benefit of being an art educator, at times overlooked, is that there are relatively few curricular regulations or institutional guidelines to which she or he must strictly adhere. It is not often that decision-makers peer over the shoulders of art educators to direct their instructional practice in explicit and resolute ways. What is actually taught and communicated to learners about art is quite often a matter of individual choice with little specific directed regulation or expectation from the state, school district, or surrounding institution.

For this reason, art educators are choice makers more so than many other educators. Teachers of art and those educators working in art museums and community based art sites most frequently have the autonomy and self-determination to choose what is taught and how their individual practice is conducted. This freedom of choice in art instruction brings with it, however, the essential need to be thoughtful and judicious about what is furnished to those under our care and, conversely, critically mindful about what art knowledge and skills we decide to withhold from learners. We each must ask: What do I want those who encounter my program to know about art? What should these participants be able to do artistically because of the experiences provided to them? How do learners value the arts as an outcome of my care and effort with them? Answers to these essential questions become the instructive features to help decide what knowledge, skills, and attitudes about art should be imparted to individuals under my guidance and what content in art we select to keep from them. The formally situated education of others is not a neutral, value-free action. As art educators it is up to each of us to decide what art content is revealed to learners and what is concealed from them. The art knowledge and skills we choose to transmit, as well as what we omit from

instruction, is telltale evidence of what we believe foundationally about art, education, learners, and society.

Purposes of Art Education

Personally-established decisions about what constitutes appropriate content and instruction in art has been the common approach to art education in this country for many decades. It is the person in charge of art instruction—whether that engagement occurs in schools, museums, or community sites—more than anyone else who decides what art knowledge and skills learners receive. With this in mind, it is important to ask on what basis such pedagogical decisions are made? Individual practices of art instruction emerge from the particular foundational purposes of art education held by each educator. In other words, our day-to-day actions of providing art experiences for others grow from and reflect our internalized beliefs about what constitutes the proper purposes of art and art education. We impart to others the art content and skill we believe to be necessary and essential for them. Concurrently, our instructional approach to furnishing learners these art experiences occurs in a manner we consider most appropriate and meaningful in meeting their needs. This is why it is imperative that all art educators think deeply and passionately about what they believe about art, art education, learners, and society prior to and as they engage in the everyday practice of art education.

The following is a list of 50 purposes of art education drawn from writings in the field spanning today to the mid-nineteenth century with some of these purposes present in times earlier than this. A look to the past reveals that many of the purposes of art education we hold for ourselves today were actually in place as support and direction for art education decades ago. It is useful to acknowledge and view the purposes and practices of art education today through the perspective of times past. This longitudinal look at ourselves and our field enables us to recognize, more clearly and productively, our present location within art education. Situating our current purposes and practices of art education in relation to a time and location beyond ourselves should enlarge our perspective toward art education, thus giving time-honored support for

- the purposes of art education we espouse and that shape our practice of art education today.
- Consider the following nonhierarchical listing of 50 purposes for art education. From it, select a limited number of purposes (perhaps five) that reflect most clearly your personal beliefs about art education.
- I engage in art education and/or instruct others in art so that learners may:**
1. develop a sense of appreciation and “good taste”
 2. increase vocational possibilities
 3. grow in their independent thinking
 4. discover and develop their artistic talent
 5. cultivate and express a sense of beauty
 6. gain skills in observation
 7. train their hand, mind, and eye
 8. be assisted in other non-art school subjects or fields of knowledge outside school
 9. have a break from their other non-art school subjects
 10. engage in a form of play
 11. develop democratic behavior as an engaged citizen
 12. have an outlet for self-expression
 13. study elements of art and principles of design
 14. learn neatness, dexterity, and precision through their work
 15. experience an appreciation for nature
 16. gain an appreciation for the built environment
 17. be provided social and emotional growth
 18. experience a universal language, spoken by all people
 19. explore emerging technology and the digital world
 20. strengthen national security, promote nationalistic effort in time of war
 21. engage in the exploration of contemporary social issues
 22. initiate and expand opportunities to use art materials
 23. think and work like an artist
 24. encourage spontaneity and originality
 25. provide a concrete outlet for their imagination
 26. further students’ character development and moral citizenship
 27. gain and build skills in problem solving
 28. facilitate international connections and contribute to world peace
 29. have aesthetic experiences
 30. learn and utilize a vocabulary of expression
 31. cultivate aesthetic judgment
 32. provide a therapeutic outlet
 33. be creative
 34. make intelligent choices with regard to home furnishings, apparel, constructed landscapes, and other areas of daily life
 35. gain cultural values
 36. gain multi-cultural values
 37. engage in leisure time enjoyment
 38. experience respect for one’s own effort and the efforts of others
 39. develop visual perception
 40. develop visual literacy
 41. learn about art and artists from the past
 42. increase their ability to discuss works of art
 43. become knowledgeable consumers
 44. learn about and investigate the surrounding visual culture
 45. learn about and investigate the surrounding material culture
 46. explore religious and/or spiritual aspects of humanity
 47. engage in studies of gender
 48. benefit themselves and their community through service learning
 49. explore the world through multiple senses
 50. investigate “Big Ideas,” “Critical Themes,” “Essential Concepts,” or “Significant Questions” in the world.



As a numerated list of 50 purposes for art education, this inventory is not prioritized nor is it exhaustive. We believe this list will continue to grow in length and breadth of richness as additional purposes of art education emerge and the field of art education continues to expand in years to come.

Purposes of Art Education within Art Institutions

Purposes of art education are present and resonate within art institutions and art programs, much as they are revealed when examining an individual’s personal beliefs about art and art education. This should not come as a surprise since art activities conveyed in any setting are not developed and conducted apart from individuals who design and administer them. Thus, it is tremendously beneficial for institutions as well as individuals in art education to pause and reflect on why they design and carry out their work in a particular manner. What motivates art institutions to do what they do? What information and ideas about art are communicated through specific art programming that occurs within these institutions, and why? What art knowledge and skill is withheld and not shared with participants through these same institutional art programs, and why is this so? The intended practices of any art programming will develop from and align themselves with the purposes held by the surrounding supporting institution and those who direct programming and work within it. To demonstrate how purposes of art education steer the educational activities of an arts-based institution, we explore some of the fundamental purposes and practices of art education evident in a program conducted at Artpace San Antonio, where one of the authors of this article, Kaela Hoskings, is Curator of Education.

Artpace San Antonio

A close look into the educational practices of a specific arts institution helps to reveal how an art educator’s particular beliefs about the purposes of art education help to shape the programming and practices of that institution. Artpace San Antonio, a non-profit organization located in the heart of downtown San Antonio, serves as an international laboratory for the creation and advancement of contemporary art. The residencies, exhibitions, and education programs conducted at Artpace San Antonio



FIGURE 1 E.V. Day. *CatFight*, 2011. Installation view. Originally commissioned and produced by Artpace San Antonio. Photos by Todd Johnson

FIGURE 2 E.V. Day. *CatFight*, 2011. Installation view (detail). Originally commissioned and produced by Artpace San Antonio. Photos by Todd Johnson

PURPOSE OF ART EDUCATION 1: GAIN SKILLS IN OBSERVATION

Artpace After Hours Perspective

Contemporary art often displays echoes of art from earlier times. Frequently it engages the viewer in an art mystery. As novices investigate unfamiliar territory within the world of contemporary art, participants at Artpace After Hours begin with the acronym ApAH as a guide for

discovery. The first letter “A” signifies Attention. Guests in the After Hours program are encouraged to slow down in their viewing and pay close attention to the art around them. Participants are asked to investigate the artwork for details and to propose questions: What materials did the artist use? Are there any hints about how the art was made? What might have been the process the artist used? How do the pieces in the space connect with one another? For participants, close observation and responding to questions becomes a non-threatening approach to looking for clues within the mysteries, riddles, and questions of contemporary art.

Artists today frequently employ new forms of media in unexpected ways. Not readily understood by visitors who are uninitiated to considerations of contemporary art, such work is often given a cursory glance by these viewers as they move on to engage art that is more familiar to them. By emphasizing observation, visitors begin to gain confidence as they look to find items in the work that no one else has spotted. For example, two saber-tooth tiger skeletons fighting mid-air instantly drew in audience members to the Spring 2011 Artpace exhibition by Artist-in-Residence E. V. Day (New York, New York), but it is a careful observer who could locate the silver-leafed skull hanging nearby or the intricate shadows created in the space that add to the story of the piece and help solve the mystery of what the work might mean (Figures 1 & 2).

Attention to the details of a piece of art benefits the participants in the Artpace After Hours program in several ways. For instance, such close observation gives guests an entry point into looking at art in a casual way, which is almost akin to playing the game I Spy. By searching for small and sometimes individually familiar details, visitors begin to feel a sense of ownership over the process of contemplating art. At times, camaraderie among the participants begins to develop as they embark on the journey of looking and discovery together. Observation is the initial step in their engagement with contemporary art. The attention they give to the art sets Artspace After Hours participants up for success as they move forward on their path to understanding contemporary art and assists them in becoming even more attuned to the world beyond the walls of Artpace.

Some Historical Antecedent

Gaining skills in observation has been a primary purpose of art education for generations. This skill development experience has occurred through both the observation of art as well as in making art. Copying items from nature, the work of other artists, or objects nearby has been a staple process of education in art since the Renaissance. Drawing

realistically from the figure became an essential part of art instruction in seventeenth-century France (Efland, 1990). Years later, observational drawing was promoted for New England school children by Walter Smith (1873), recommending students work in response to “plaster casts . . . from groups of natural objects, as fruits and flowers; from still life and objects of art in water-colors” (p. 58). Drawing individual objects and still-life compositions of common household objects was encouraged by Froehlich and Snow (1905), stating that the “study of still-life forms is a correct and accurate habit of work” (p. 41). The surrounding world of nature was promoted as a springboard for observational drawing by Clark, Hicks, and Perry (1897) stating that, “pupils should be provided with branches of familiar trees, shrubs or smaller plants with both foliage and flowers” (p. 168). These authors summarize that beyond the ability to draw, however, is the necessity of accurate observation: “It must be recognized that in instruction in drawing the appearance of objects must relate primarily to instruction in seeing, and that pupils fail in drawing the appearance of objects more from an inability to see than from inability to draw” (Clark, Hicks, & Perry, 1897, p. 5).

Discussing students learning about art through the focused examination of artworks, Hurl (1914) talks about introducing students to the “powers of observation” and “habits of observation” (p. 4), while Mathias (1929) encourages students to develop their “ability ‘to read’ pictures” (p. 154) for themselves. Perhaps the most noted picture study writer of the early-twentieth century, Charles Caffin (1910) expressed that art should be scrutinized to “stimulate interest and the faculty of observation . . . so that the student may gain a basis of appreciation from which to extend his[her] observations with understanding and enjoyment” (p. xiv). Throughout the twentieth century and in an abundance of educational sites today, securing a faithful and detailed perception of art and the world around us through observation has been a primary purpose and motivation for the efforts undertaken by art educators and art learners.

PURPOSE OF ART EDUCATION 2: BE ASSISTED IN OTHER SCHOOL SUBJECTS OR FIELDS OF KNOWLEDGE OUTSIDE SCHOOL

Artpace After Hours Perspective

Participants in Artpace After Hours are adult learners from a variety of professional backgrounds. Employment descriptors range from software engineering to marketing and accounting to law. Each of these learners in the After Hours program brings a unique perspective to the consideration of a work of art. These participants are not learning specific school-based subject content in relation to art; Artpace After Hours is intended for learners to create interdisciplinary connections among a wide range of topics and subject areas.

The second letter of the ApAH acronym (p) stands for Personal connection. The definition of personal connection for participants is as broadly diverse as the guests to the program, and for this reason, the personal meaning drawn from the work may include a consideration of

things such as the color of a particular object or a childhood memory that emerges from observational contact. All avenues of interpretation are open and possible. A focus on art in relation to content areas such as mathematics, social studies, writing, and science, however, is fostered through conversation.

Fall 2011 Artist-in-Residence Jeff Williams (Austin, Texas) created a space-oriented work titled: *There is Not Anything Which Returns to Nothing* (Figure 3). His work exemplified the concept of personal connection as the pieces in his exhibition had strong ties to mathematics, engineering, and geology. Precariously balanced in the center of the room were four stacked concrete blocks that had been pressured almost to the point of breaking. The room also included a rock emitting a steady stream of water, and several photographs showcasing engineering materials. Guests made direct personal connections to the work, such as the rock fountain reminding them of a hiking trip, or others commenting more abstractly that it was a study in erosion. Participants in Artpace After Hours also began to speculate that Williams’ work could be approached like a science project using the Scientific Method.

Guests to the After Hours program continued their sleuthing among the exhibition, which led to additional questions constructed by the facilitator to help guide conversation. Example questions include: Is there anything in the space that you connect with personally? Are there elements you are familiar with that pertain to your job or career? If you were still in school, how would this work of art align with your studies in English, mathematics, social studies, or science? Creating a personal connection with the art also helps guests become invested in the process of learning, because they are given the opportunity to share their own stories and areas of expertise with others. These connections help each participant in the Artpace After Hours program to feel they are an essential part of the discussion, thus encouraging a greater understanding of the vital and personal nature of contemporary art.

Some Historical Antecedent

Since the early days of formal art instruction in the public schools of the United States an emphasis has been placed on teaching art in conjunction with other school subjects. In the 1840s, noted educator Horace Mann supported instruction in drawing as a way to increase the quality of an individual’s handwriting (orthography) (Bennett, 1926), a subject that was required in most public schools at that time. Throughout the second half of the 1800s, the often-requisite school subject geography was taught through free-hand map drawing (Bolin, 1986). Discussing “Social Study Correlation” with the subject of art, Welling and Pelikan (1939) offered a printmaking lesson to explore “Printing-Development Since Benjamin Franklin Days” (p. 32). Illuminating a similar focus on connections between art and social studies, some 20 years earlier Pedro J. Lemos (1920) encouraged students in the construction of flags from around the world:

It [flag construction] will be an easy matter for the children of a class, during a year’s period Such a general problem will acquaint the class with many countries, as the next interest on their part will be to know about the people and the land to which each flag belongs. (p. 86)

Lemos (1920) sums his views of correlating art with other academic areas of the curriculum, believing that, “Art problems should be related to the other school subjects at every opportunity” (p. 86). Whether these instructional connections take place in structured and formal ways, or if they occur through more unplanned and spontaneous opportunities, the linking of art with a host of other non-art subjects or fields of knowledge has been a primary purpose for art instruction throughout many generations.

FIGURE 3 Jeff Williams. *There is Not Anything Which Returns to Nothing*, 2011. Installation view. Originally commissioned and produced by Artpace San Antonio. Photos by Todd Johnson

PURPOSE OF ART EDUCATION 3: INCREASE THEIR ABILITY TO DISCUSS WORKS OF ART

Artpace After Hours Perspective

The discussion of art plays a vital role throughout an evening at Artpace After Hours. Participants in the event are immediately encouraged to begin their experience with casual conversations utilizing a simple activity drawn from the category-based word game Scattergories. Armed with Post-It® notes, pens, and their creative thoughts, participants respond to five categories that relate to the Artpace exhibitions and contemporary art. Prompts are intended to start a conversation about art, which is generated in a somewhat subtle way. Examples of these prompts include: (a) materials used to make contemporary art, (b) verbs that describe ways to manipulate art materials, and (c) approaches for documenting or recording something. This quick conversation activity easily draws in participants as they meet other guests and are welcomed by the Artpace staff.

As guests view the exhibitions they consider the first two steps in the ApAH acronym by paying Attention and making Personal connections, actions designed to initiate communication exchanges among the group’s participants. The third letter in ApAH captures the notion Articulate, as visitors are asked to share some of their findings from the first two steps in the process of engaging works of art. By this time most participants have already shared clues discovered along the way and found opportunities to connect the art with their own lives. Initiating the step Articulate helps to persuade some of the more hesitant guests to share their thoughts and opinions about what the artwork might be about or signify, how all the art pieces in the room fit together, and what the artist might be trying to communicate to the viewer. Participants are urged to consider that the “A” could also mean Argue. By asking guests to explain why their conclusions are unique and differ from ideas of others, the communication among participants grows in amount, quality, and, at times, intensity.

Some Historical Antecedent

Assisting the development of a learner’s ability to discuss works of art has been an important feature of art education in the United States for many years. The picture study movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was designed to engage individuals in examining and reflecting on works of art, encouraging thoughtful conversation among those who encounter the artwork. Engaging in picture study, young children were asked to create descriptive and imaginative stories from the works of art they encountered in these publications, or answer specific questions about their response to these artworks. Picture study for adults was directed toward formal criticism and “appreciation” of artwork. Another example of helping learners increase their ability to discuss works of art is seen in Stafford and Rucker’s (1933) *Modern Art: Art Appreciation Textbooks—Part Eight*. This publication contains a number of lessons focused on topics such as “Color Harmony,” “Early American Painting,” and “Package Design.” Throughout these art lessons from 80 years ago, students are asked to “lead a discussion of the commercial textiles” (p. 6-A), “mention qualities of the picture that appeal to them” (p. 12-A), and “have a class discussion of the caricatures brought by the pupils” (p. 15-A). Conversation about art was an important feature of art learning. Samson’s (1868) *Elements of Art Criticism*, Hamerton’s (1871) *Thoughts about Art*, and Crane’s (1885) *Art and the Formation of Taste* help display the vibrant interest in art criticism and discourse about art that was present in the United States and elsewhere in the late nineteenth century. Discussing and responding to works of art is not a feature of art learning that has emerged recently in this country. Helping children and adults develop knowledge and skill in criticism and conversation about art has been a foundational purpose of art education in the United States for many years.

PURPOSE OF ART EDUCATION 4: DEVELOP A SENSE OF APPRECIATION AND “GOOD TASTE”

Artpace After Hours Perspective

As an evening of Artpace After Hour commences, two primary goals are presented to the participants: (a) provide them with a behind-the-scenes introduction to Artpace San Antonio, and (b) develop skills that help them look at contemporary art with greater confidence. The first three letters in the acronym ApAH, Attention, Personal connection, and Articulate, are introduced not only as a way to guide viewers through the experience of the evening, but also as an avenue in helping them to achieve the two goals the event is trying to accomplish.

The final “H” in the acronym represents Hypothesis, and guests are asked to draw their own conclusions about the works of art they explore. Educators explain to the group that encountering contemporary art has both challenges and rewards, and that one of the most significant outcomes they are provided is the opportunity to suggest their own hypotheses about works of art. These hypotheses are not necessarily grand and in-depth realizations regarding the meaning of the exhibition or discerning the artist’s often multi-layered and sometimes enigmatic intentions. Rather, hypotheses are achieved through more quiet moments of personal engagement, reflection, and acceptance of the work. Participants arrive at a place in the process where they have grown to appreciate this new, and perhaps intimidating, style of art.

Many Artpace After Hours participants come to the event with preconceived notions and beliefs about contemporary art, and often times carrying an aversion to what contemporary art is or can be. By investigating all four parts of ApAH and assisting visitors in creating their own conclusions about the art they have encountered, guests develop an increased sense of appreciation for contemporary art at Artpace and in the world around them.

Some Historical Antecedent

For many years, helping to build an appreciation for art within individuals has been a primary goal and purpose for art education. Nineteenth century picture study books with titles such as *How to Look at Pictures* (Witt, 1905), *The Appreciation of Pictures* (Sturgis, 1905), and *How to Judge of a Picture* (Van Dyke, 1889) were designed to instruct the reader in how best to approach the understanding and appreciation of works of art. It was through such experiences with “Old Masters” (Tytler, 1874, p. v) that learners of all ages were taught to view, wonder about, and appreciate artwork from a time much earlier than their own. A bit more recent, Thomas Munro (1941) writing about art and aesthetics just prior to World War II, considered art appreciation in a quite thorough manner, including mention of objects of “practical use,” such as the “the appearance of a cup, a chair, or a house” (p. 329). At the same time Trilling and Williams (1942) echoed these notions through the day-to-day appreciation of art in “home and dress” (p. v). Closer to our day, Faulkner, Ziegfeld, and Hill (1956) presented the challenge in learning to appreciate the world of contemporary art, expressing the need to investigate the work of “new masters,” making “every attempt to be open-minded about new experiments, new techniques, new expressions” (p. 438). Though written more than 50 years ago, this admonishment to be receptive of emerging and unfamiliar works of art captures a challenge of involvement with contemporary art encouraged with participants in the Artpace After Hours program and many other locations of art education. Even though the references made here to developing a sense of good taste and appreciation in art are drawn from art education literature ranging from 1874 to 1956, they resonate still within the purposes of art education today.



FIGURE 4 Florian Slotawa. *Local Plants*, 2012.
Installation view. Originally commissioned and produced
by Artpace San Antonio. Photos by Todd Johnson

PURPOSE OF ART EDUCATION 5: LEARN ABOUT AND INVESTIGATE THE SURROUNDING MATERIAL CULTURE

Artpace After Hours Perspective

Artpace After Hours has welcomed hundreds of guests since its inception in 2011. Throughout this time, a common thread of reflection has presented itself at every Artspace After Hours event. Participants in Artpace After Hours are frequently hesitant to embrace contemporary art because of the mediums of expression that contemporary artists often choose to use: common objects from the familiar world that surrounds us, rather than materials and process more expected, such as painting, drawing, and sculpture. At Artpace San Antonio, all education program participants are introduced to the idea that art can be made using anything we choose around us, which often includes items from our everyday experience—the material culture of our lives. The term “material culture” is a phrase that describes the vast terrain of objects, structures, and spaces that make up our world (Bolin & Blandy, 2011; Sheumaker & Wajda, 2008). While children are eager to embrace the idea and process of including objects of our everyday lives into works of art, adults frequently push back and begin with the “But is it art?” argument.

Artpace San Antonio artists have employed a vast array of objects from our nearby world to complete innovative exhibitions that help delineate the art of today. Some pieces, like E. V. Day’s saber-tooth cats (Figures 1 & 2), include unorthodox materials that audiences are enthusiastic to accept, such as casts of skeletons reminiscent of visiting a natural history museum and snakes based on the construction of three-dimensional hobby puzzles. Other exhibitions, like that of Spring 2012 International Artist-in-Residence Florian Slotawa (Berlin, Germany), provide a greater challenge. Slotawa’s exhibition was comprised of found furniture, components used in response to the work of artists Donald Judd, Carl Andre, and Katarzyna Kobro, and a series of native flora (Figure 4). Utilizing common everyday objects like furniture and plants that can be located at nearby hardware stores, participants found it effortless to make personal connections and articulate their responses. On the other hand, communicating a hypothesis about what these works of art, which contained an abundance of familiar objects, might mean had many guests stumped. The objects appeared to be a little too common and familiar for many visitors to consider them art.

For educators at Artpace San Antonio, there is a sense of genuine reward that occurs when experiencing a participant’s “Aha” moment in their interactions with contemporary art. The greatest payback frequently comes when a guest can gain a sense of appreciation toward a work of art that features materials or content requiring the visitor to make an investigative or contemplative stretch. Exhibitions that showcase material culture—the objects of our lives—are ripe for those moments of surprise and awe as participants feel empowered and challenged to continue their informal study of contemporary art.

Some Historical Antecedent

Exploration into material culture often embraces the study of common everyday objects and structures, which has been a part of art education for many years (McFee & Degge, 1980). For example, in the Owatonna Art Project of the mid-1930s, a broad array of ordinary objects, structures, and designed spaces within this Minnesota community were investigated to learn how “Art is a way of life” (Ziegfeld & Smith, 1944, p. 5). Seventy years ago, Trilling and Williams (1942) offered that, “everyone should

learn to use art in his everyday life” (p. 3). McFee and Kensler’s (1974) curriculum publication *Art in the World Around Us* directed learners to explore, visually and tactilely, objects, structures, and designed spaces in our surrounding environment, as an essential feature of art instruction. One hundred years prior to the writing of McFee and Kensler, Walter Smith’s drawing books of the 1870s, asked students to copy, in exact detail, line drawings of the material culture from everyday nineteenth-century life, such as drinking goblets, vases, chairs, and building features. It is evident Walter Smith did not ask students to explore and reflect upon the deep and rich meaning of these objects from everyday life as is done in the study of material culture today, yet from these examples it is seen that throughout the past 140 years art educators have been challenged to include the investigation of conventional objects and common material culture into their instruction.

CONCLUSION

The foundational purposes of art education we each embrace drive the actions of our instructional practice. This is the case for individual conveyers of art learning, such as K-12 classroom art teachers, community arts workers, and art museum educators. Purpose-motivated art education is also evident in an abundance of arts institutions and programs housed within them, such as San Antonio’s Artpace After Hours. What we do with and for those we educate, individually or institutionally, is predicated on what we believe is most beneficial for them. With this axiom in mind, it is essential that each of us consciously identify and discern, with earnest, the purposes for art education we hold in priority, and do so as we consider carefully what information we impart to learners as well as what knowledge and skill we withhold from them. We cannot convey all the information about art that could be taught, thus we need to ask ourselves deeply: On what basis are the decisions made to include some information to learners and omit other knowledge and skill from them?

Art education in the United States has been about many things over the past 150 years and more. The purposes of art education we espouse and those we discard are each grounded in some longstanding sentiment, often going back many decades, and perhaps centuries. It is abundantly useful as we decide which purposes of art education to adopt and those to disregard, to explore the role these purposes of art education have played in years gone by. Through such investigation, we are able to reflect intently on the value and benefit of past purposes and practices of art education enabling us to make thoughtfully conscious decisions about the purposes of art education we now uphold, and their influence on our present and future actions within the field.

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Curator of Education Kaela Hoskings guides and administers Artpace San Antonio’s education programs for youth and adult audiences. She holds a BFA in Art Education, BA in Studio Art from The University of Texas at Austin, and specializes in museum art education. She is a certified educator with classroom teaching experience and has held previous positions in museum education at the Blanton Museum of Art in Austin, Texas, the Modern Art Museum in Fort Worth, Texas, and the Mexic-Arte Museum in Austin, Texas. Kaela currently holds the position of Museum Division Chair-Elect for the Texas Art Education Association (TAEA), which facilitates professional development sessions with museum educators from across the state.



Dr. Paul E. Bolin is a Professor of Art Education and Visual Art Studies at The University of Texas at Austin, where he serves as both Assistant Chair and Graduate Advisor for Art Education. He has edited and co-edited four books, including *Matter Matters: Art Education and Material Culture Studies* (2011), published by the National Art Education Association (NAEA). He is a recipient of teaching awards from the University of Oregon, The Pennsylvania State University, and The University of Texas at Austin and has twice received the NAEA Manuel Barkan Memorial Award for published work in art education.



**VOICES OF ARTISTS:
LISTENING
TO STORIES
OF EXPERIENCE**



INTERVIEW WITH STEPHEN LAPTISO-PHON

by Amanda Alexander

Introduction:

I have known Stephen Lapthison for two years through working with him at UT-Arlington (UTA). My first recollection of Stephen was through an invited panel lecture for graduate MFA students at UTA. I remember listening to him speak so eloquently and intently about Martin Heidegger's *The Origin of the Work of Art* as if he recently had a conversation with the 20th century philosopher. He was extremely knowledgeable about Heidegger and discussed how MFA students could use Heidegger's literature and ideas to more critically think about and make meaning in their artwork. I found Stephen's examination to be very inspirational, and I hope you enjoy learning more about this Texas-based artist.

Background:

Where have you lived and worked? Where do you live now?

From the age of five through high school, I grew up in Houston, Texas. I then moved to Austin, Texas to study for my undergraduate degree, and then I moved to Chicago, Illinois to study for my graduate degree at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. I worked on my MFA and stayed in Chicago for many years, and then went back and forth from Chicago to Dallas starting in 2001 for many exhibitions, shows, and a Visiting Professor position at UT-Dallas. Finally, I moved to Dallas full time in 2007.

Are you a full-time artist?

Yes, I am an artist. I happily identify as an artist, but I don't know what full time means. I teach at UT-Arlington too.

How did you come to be interested in the arts?

Neither of my parents were artists, but they were always very encouraging of me to go see art. I think mostly it was from school settings where I could talk with art teachers, partake in art classes, go on art field trips, and discuss with friends who liked the arts. Beyond that I started doing it because I loved it and was good at it. I grew up going to an excellent high school that supported the arts. I also had a friend whose mother collected art, and so I would go to galleries with them in 9th and 10th grades. I enjoyed reading and looking at art magazines during those years too.

What memories or associations do you have with your early art experiences?

My parents were both public school teachers. My mother was originally from Nebraska, and she spent some time going to high school and college in Mexico City, Mexico. Later living and growing up in Texas, we went to Mexico a lot as a family. I remember when I was twelve I saw the Mexican muralists which was very informative and important for me. I was very excited about the political art as well as art with which depicts Mexican daily life. It wasn't the traditional or older work that necessarily excited me. I was drawn to the muralist artists, and the activist work that was happening.



What are the motivations that have sustained your active engagement in the arts?

I'm not sure how anybody keeps the drive going because it's a hard thing to do. It's not a job. I know many think that art making (at least to outsiders) is a self-indulging playtime. However, whether my description is self-serving or not, I think it's one of the hardest things to do. To maintain the drive and stay with the practice is difficult. It's hard to constantly challenge yourself so that you don't repeat work or make product for a living. I am constantly rediscovering aspects of the past and of art history that encourages me and makes me want to honor different past traditions—it's a big part of my work.

I try to keep pushing myself in ways that are vital and real and to not be convinced that I'm always right. I don't think one can expect to make a living from just art (unless you are an art star). It has to be something that is done because you are driven to do it. For me that drive is different everyday depending on whether I have a show, or I'm just doing it because the physical act is pleasing to me. I think what's important is to be aware of why you are making art.

Why are the arts important to you?

I think creativity is an important thing in culture. I have an ego, and I want to be heard. The artistic and creative practices are important to society in terms of a way of thinking that only takes place in art making. For myself, I work at it because I want an audience. I try to find ways to obtain exposure while at the same time maintaining a certain amount of integrity. In contemporary society, art making needs to find a legitimate place. In

some ways, contemporary society, through commercialization and consumption, has made art making irrelevant. It needs to be taught to be a meaningful activity.

Artwork:

What are the main issues, themes or ideas in your artwork? How have these developed over time?

A lot of my work involves talking about culture and paying tribute to other ways of working. My work has to do with finding a contemporary expression for a certain kind of lost radicality—a place where people feel alive and active. I try to call attention to other artists who maybe need to be rescued. So most of my work has to do with other artists and the past in general, and through that, most of what I do is about the passage of time and the wear and tear of everyday life. Much of my work also has to do with everyday objects and daily routine. There are a lot of simple things in my work, a lot of found objects, and many things that aren't noble or special. They are just recontextualized or reorganized so an audience could see them.

I had vision loss eighteen years ago (1994), and it certainly is unavoidable in what I do, but I don't think it changes what I do. My work doesn't look that

FIGURES 1 & 2 Screen Shots from *Amanueusis (I hear a Symphony)*, 2004



much different from before and after the vision loss, but it's certainly an unavoidable part of what I do. I don't feel that it has affected it a great deal. Yes, I have done exhibitions that are specifically about disability, and I will address those issues. There are ways that I have dealt with vision and blindness in metaphorical ways.

Please share and discuss three of your artworks, or series of artworks, that have had the greatest personal meaning to you.

1. Film – *Unpacking My Library*

It's a collection of a lot of my interests in terms of the depictions of everydayness and the way we write and think.

2. Book – *Hotel Terminus*

It's a four hundred and fifty page book of images that capture a lot of what I do.

3. Installation – *On the Nature of the Deictic (Why I Write Such Good Books)*

This is an installation that I did in a warehouse in West Dallas. It showcases my work in terms of dealing with the physical and spatial environment than about particular objects.

How do you see your artwork and/or artistic practices as educating and engaging to communities?

Much of what I do is in noncommercial spaces, and there's a lecture or educational aspect to it. Sometimes there is a direct educational component where I provide information on the ideas in the show. In addition, there are often ideas in the work itself that reference other artists, artworks, and history. If the audience spends some time with my work or does a little research, they will hopefully educate themselves about the ideas.

How do you conceptualize art education?

I teach a lot of different flavors of art in art education. I try to approach every situation from a similar place, which is to say that art making is a kind of critical thinking. Consequently, it becomes a way of solving problems. How we share the solution to the problem with others becomes what the art is, and we are constantly displaying our decision-making and/or our choices. I think giving a student encouragement to be risk taking in their thinking and in their way of solving problems is important, but it also serves anyone in their life. If they are encouraged and allowed to be creative thinkers, it will help them even when it comes to filing their taxes. It will be helpful to them. I treat art education as a process of thinking through materials and encourage people to see the situation they are in and to find a solution to solving that problem. I hope that what they see is that there isn't a right answer. They are embracing multitude.

Sometimes students want a set of instructions on how to do something. I always say to those students, 'I don't know how to tell you what you want to do.' I want to encourage someone to feel empowered to do what s/he wants to do, and I want s/he to see what is legitimate and right in her/his choice. Freedom is sometimes scary for students.

How might your artwork inspire new artists or art teachers?

I think it will be different for each person who sees my work. I would hope that someone could take the message that there is more than one answer/solution. We don't have to be enormously rule-bound in the way that we think, and people will come away from some of the pieces that I make with a better reference to other artists. Hopefully they will take the time to look at some of the people that I am referring to and see where their curiosity takes them in that way. I know that my work is often challenging and requires someone to settle in and take time with the pieces to fully understand them. If they spend the time, they will be rewarded.

I'm not sure that my vision disability would inspire anyone. I think my vision isn't the stumbling block, but the difficulty in keeping going in a difficult world. I'm sure some would be inspired, but it's hard for me to see it myself.



FIGURE 3 Green Ramp from *With Reasonable Accommodation*, 2002



FIGURE 4 *Unpacking My Library*

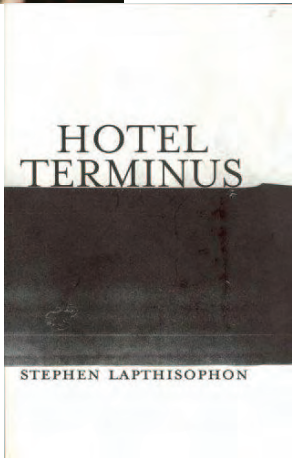


FIGURE 5 *Hotel Terminus*

Conclusion:

If you would like to learn more about Stephen Lapthisophon, please consider checking out his online spaces including his website, Vimeo page, and blog.

Website: <http://www.stephenlapthisophon.com>
Vimeo: <http://vimeo.com/user5545761>
Blog: <http://studiodesk.blogspot.com>

Stephen is a true inspiration from whom art educators could learn much about modern and postmodern art making. It is my hope that art educators will use his artwork and resources to develop curriculum for the K-12 art classroom.



FIGURE 6 *On the Nature of the Deictic*



FIGURES 7 & 8 *Menu*, 2009, Ink, Latex and Coffee on Paper; *Spoerri Ink*, 2007, Collage and Coffee on Paper



FIGURE 10 *Spelling Lesson*, 2011

INTERVIEW WITH
MARGO SAWYER

by Christina Bain

Introduction

Margo Sawyer is a colleague of mine; we both work in the College of Fine Arts at The University of Texas at Austin. Although we have only known each other for two years, each time I bump into her in the hallway, mailroom or a committee meeting, I feel like I'm greeting a friend that I've known for years. I've heard students comment favorably on her slight British accent, her skill in teaching sculpture courses, as well as her commitment to mentoring students. Margo has the heart of a teacher. My interview with her was a wonderful opportunity to learn more about her artistic influences as well as her career as an artist and educator.

Background:

Where have you lived and worked? Where do you live now?

My early history, I was the child of a diplomatic father and we lived all over the world. [In] Britain, Africa, the French Cameroon, America. I've been fortunate over the years. After graduate school, I went and studied in London at the Chelsea School of Art. Then I went on to Yale to do graduate work. After that I got a Fulbright to go live in India for a year and travel throughout India looking at rituals and temples; the art and architecture of India. Probably a decade later I got a Fulbright grant to go to Japan for a year and a half. So where I've lived has fully influenced the type of work—and I think my fascination with the ancient world too—really informs my creativity as a contemporary artist. I currently live in Texas and I teach at The University of Texas at Austin. I've lived here the longest of anywhere that I've lived.

Are you a full-time artist?

I'm a full time artist and art educator.

How did you come to be interested in the arts?

At a very young age, because of my travel and being multi-lingual, I was in the remedial class at school [in Britain]. So, I was a remedial student and the year I went into secondary school, back then they would have grammar school and then secondary modern. And secondary modern was always like the poorer, kind of not so well off kids, sort of the less educated. The grammar school always had the rich kids and the high performing students. The year I went into the school they eliminated that. They made it a comprehensive school, so we were all together. There was a hierarchy, but we were all together. There were three separate campuses. On each campus, I think there were four art faculty. They were these young men and women who ignited my love and passion for the work that I do! I still keep in contact with two of them. I saw them in New York recently for a friend's wedding. A couple of years ago, one of the art teachers came to New York and we spent the day together. We went through

museums. He's been to my studio when I lived in New York and you could tell that he was very proud that his student was living the life that he had been educating us to do. It's been really sweet to continue this friendship.

What memories or associations do you have with your early art experiences?

I think my inspiration to become an artist was kind of enforced by travel. When I was thirteen my mother took me to Egypt. That was during the 1973 war and we were the first seventeen tourists allowed in to the country and that experience was profound. It really influenced what I do today in that what I experienced was artwork that was monumental; that used color. That was a marriage between art and architecture. There were no hierarchies between whether something was a painting or a sculpture and throughout my work I've always wanted to bridge all of those things. That experience has continued to fuel my voice as an artist.

And I think the other thing that was pivotal for me was a neighbor. I think I was about fourteen and the art school had a Saturday morning art class. I would drive with this friend, whose parents would drive, it was like a forty-five minute drive to this other town—to Brighton. And then later on, I would go on my own by bus. I would get there at like nine in the morning and be there until noon, and then get the bus back. But it was in an art school, [the art class was] near where the graduate painting studios were. It was in this big old church and it was kind of cold and you could smell the turpentine. There was no hot water! You could smell oil paint everywhere. The real art students were working in the studios and there were separate rooms where the Saturday morning art class went. Again, that kind of cemented this importance of making work. And it was the one thing that I was always really good at! Everything else, at least academically, I was not that good at, but it was the one thing I could excel in! Like any child, I probably went against my parents desire for me to follow a different trajectory. But I was very willful and I said, "No, I CAN make a living." And I have made a living, so I did the right thing. But I was fortunate to have people on the way who made me realize how important [art is]—or maybe how talented I was. There were people who said, "Keep going!"

Another thing I remember was in England they have this math tool kit, for learning mathematics. They were these little wooden cubes that were different sizes and different colors. The tiniest one was white and that was like a one. There was a two cube and a four cube and so on. I just loved these cubes! I've looked for them online. They're a collector's item now. But there was sort of a tangible [experience]...and then obviously with my earlier pieces where I'm using boxes of wood that were painted (Figures 1 and 2). It's very much the same way of learning and working. There was a tactility of the objects. I mean, even today I think that the way that I work is very mathematical, but it's very intuitive. I deal with really complicated systems and structures and technical problems, but they're resolved through an intuitive way. So, there's a work of mine that is called *Cloud of Unknowing* (Figure 3). It's sort of like a giant web. For this piece, in my studio I just had two threads, and then I sort of went into mass production mode and made these sort

of sheets of diamond patterns and then we took them up to the gallery. It looks like I used a computer to plan this, but it was all made intuitively on the spot and with a team of maybe eight people. So we were all making decisions of how to knit this thing together and it's incredibly complex mathematics. It's a one foot length and a fifteen inch length and each one has different colors and how they knit together changes the mathematical system of it. It's a lot like nerves. Like rendering now in 3-D computers, you make these sort of nets that create this form. But I arrived at this form through purely intuitive methods. I mean, the diamond sheets that I made were what was one gesture and the choice to make two different lengths changed the order of the grid. It's an interesting mathematic problem, but again, it's the material...it's the tactile...it's the way of putting things together [that is important].

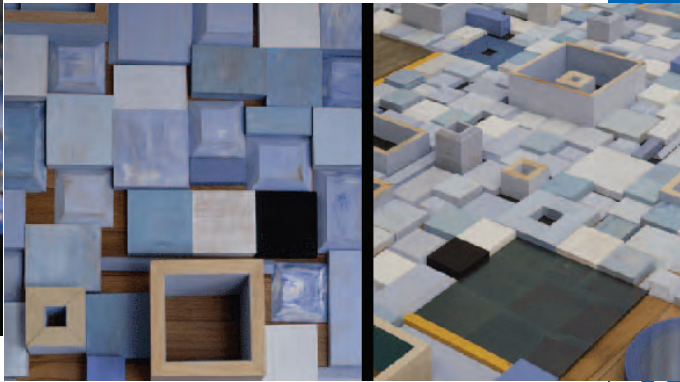
What are the motivations that have sustained your active engagement in the arts?

Actually, right now I'm in conversation with someone in the mathematics department about doing a math-art class. I think when you align things and don't silo things...when you knit together disciplines and one informs the other. I think that's where some real magic happens. Maybe in my practice I do that more than I realize, but it's from the things that I'm fascinated with. [Such as] Architecture. I'm fascinated with gardens. I'm fascinated with Asia. I'm fascinated with systems and tiling. There's a lot of different weaving...quilting. I mean, there's lots of different things like patchworks that inform the work in the broadest sense.

Even just yesterday, I got a book out. I have this beautiful book on Egypt and I hadn't looked at it for a long time. I was like, "AHH! Gosh!" Every carving, the details are just stunning! And the sort of notion of storytelling, you know, symbols that are language. The colors are so vibrant and the collisions of colors that you wouldn't normally think about. I mean, I think the opportunities that I've had to go abroad and to see things—not from a book—but from physically seeing them—that changed [me]. In a way, I've sort of self-educated myself about architectural history and art history.



FIGURE 1 Blue FIGURE 2 Blue, close-up



As a student, the ancient and Eastern world, the Far East, the Middle East, that was never part of our art education. So all of my travels have been in those areas and I've loved what I've seen. I've loved seeing the beautiful temples and going to Morocco and seeing the architecture there. I feel like I've been fortunate to place myself there. I've gained a great appreciation for cultures, but also it does come back into the work.

Why are the arts important to you?

Gosh, well, I think that art changes the world. You know, even just this piece [*Synchronicity of Color* – See Figures 5 and 6] has changed this park. The art in this park has transformed a part of Houston that used to just be parking lots. There are two hotels that have gone up and a big residential tower. The art and architecture in the park have

basically been the cornerstone to allow for that economic growth. And also that reinvention of using space in a different way. So, I think that art really can change the world. It can change individuals. It can challenge how we think about things. How we feel about things.

And I think there is something about going to a museum and looking at work and sort of having your own internal dialogue. Or [having] a dialogue with someone, or with someone giving a lecture. There's another dialogue about the artist and ruminations on what they're thinking and doing. All the depth and breadth of things that come up while you're making the work. And then when it's out in the public, like most of my pieces, how it indirectly affects people who maybe wouldn't know they're looking at a work of art? Or maybe they wouldn't go into a contemporary museum or gallery, but here they are and they get to see something that's very fresh and very of the moment and it becomes part of their life. Or they might be visiting the convention center and they come out and they say, "Oh, look at that. I like those colors. What is that?" And I personally enjoy where it's not a... where there's not this hierarchical situation. I enjoy places and things that are in the public.

Artwork:

What are the main issues, themes or ideas in your artwork? How have these developed over time?

In *Cloud* (Figure 3) the initial inspiration was a shroud of a mummy. It was this beaded shroud which covered the mummy, which all of them had. I just loved this sort of diamond on the shroud. And I made a piece called *Kiss* (Figure 4) which was a sort of first manifestation of this. If you scale up the system, what would that do? By scaling it up, the gesture is no longer a beaded shroud, it becomes a beaded wall. And these are flame-worked glass. I melted little hooks into the ends of the glass, and then these are tubes that have been cut and heated so that taking the shroud idea and scaling it up. In *Cloud of Unknowing* (Figure 3) the title is taken from—I do a

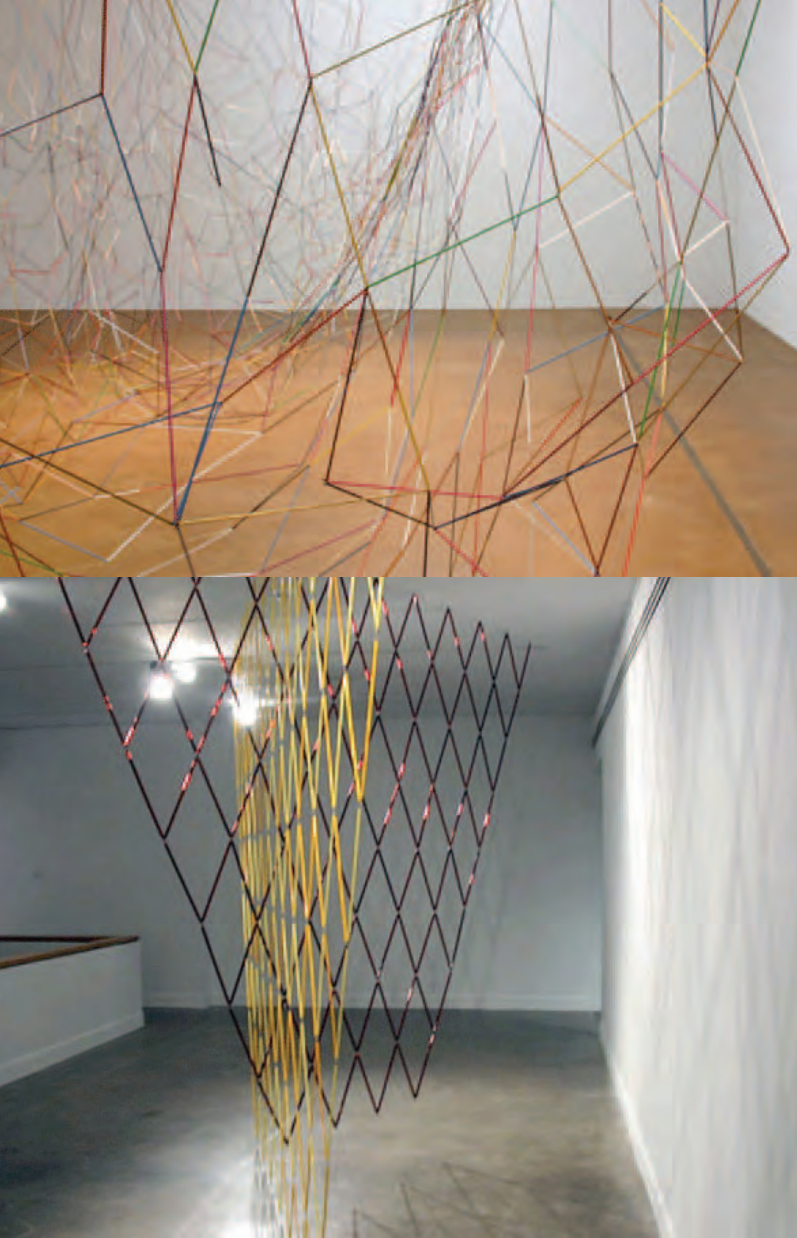


FIGURE 3 *Cloud of Unknowing*

FIGURE 4 *Kiss*

different time perspectives. And maybe different materials. But they come up again, and again, and again. The gestures that have happened very early on in life, they come back. They come back in a different form. And I see that in my students work. They do something and they don't realize the repercussions and then they refine it and it becomes something that has a real power to it. So there are cornerstones [in my work]. I might call them something one time, and something else later on depending on how I'm looking at it.

Please share and discuss three of your artworks, or series of artworks, that have had the greatest personal meaning to you.

Well, this *Synchronicity of Color* (See Figures 5 and 6) is kind of huge. It was a huge leap. So, that would be one. And then going back in time, it would probably be *Elysian Fields*

(Figures 7 and 8). It was very monumental. And probably a piece called *Blue* (Figures 1 and 2). That piece was the first of many thousands of pieces of wood that were painted. I believe that one came before I went to Japan. But when I did *Synchronicity of Color* at Discovery Green, I was thinking about what if I took this floor piece, this *Blue*, and made it vertical? And that was also like an "Ah-ha!" moment. What might happen if I take that and make it a wall? So that was a big leap for me.

How do you see your artwork and/or artistic practices as educating and engaging to communities?

What I'm working on now is that I'm making some castings. Some glass castings. And I'm working on a project for a hospital in Indianapolis. The first phase has happened, where I went in and installed objects that get taped and floated into the wall and then they become part of the wall. At the end of the construction, when everything is in, I'll place my objects around them. What was interesting about that project was that I was on the construction site in the winter and it was really freezing and there's not many women on the construction site! There's lots of guys coming around and by the end of the

first day, all of the men were coming up and going, "Oh, I put the metal studs up. And I measured the openings. I put the sheet rock up." You could tell it wasn't just a wall. All of a sudden it had become a special wall. It became an artwork. It was something that these people really, really loved. And that they were proud of what they've made. They were contributing.

And you know my piece in Houston at Discovery Green? That piece is called *Synchronicity of Color* (Figure 5 and 6). They are exits to an underground parking garage. It's all four sides and a roof that are covered in what I call a quilt of color. It's this patchwork of color. I wanted two different buildings: one blue; one red. So they're exits to an underground parking garage and you want to remember where you left. It was a huge project, it took about three years to do and a year to install. I think I hired a hundred and thirty six people. It was massive. Two factories for four months each. I mean, it was a huge undertaking. And now I look back and I can't believe I did it. But what's been amazing is that people just love this! And so it's become this icon for the city of Houston. It's transformed how people engage with this park. And everybody wants their photograph taken with it. And I look at it now, I was there this week taking photographs, and I can't believe I made it.

Let me back up a minute. With *Blue*, with this particular piece it was sold to the Austin Museum of Art. Part gift, part sale. I had to write notations as to how the piece should be installed when I'm no longer here. The last time it was shown, I actually didn't lay anything down, I just had other people lay things down. What was interesting was that everybody just loved, loved, LOVED, spending an hour or two picking up the blocks and laying them down. [They were] Following this little order [of putting things together]. It was such joy! It was sort of interesting to share some of the joy of making something.

Another project I was involved in recently was the Mona Lisa project. Where

twelve artists were asked to pose as Mona Lisa. In the same sort of position and smile and the look. And then we would alter that image and re-present that image with the way we work. That exhibition has traveled to Grand Rapids and it was in Austin Museum of Art, and then I think it was in City Hall. And every time it's shown, women, particularly, are very moved. Because a lot of the women who are being photographed, they aren't young and beautiful. We're sort of in our middle ages. And it's very, very moving. [viewers are moved] to tears. Women would look at this exhibition and even people, like when it was shown in Grand Rapids, people would linger, linger, linger and talk and look! It's not like they knew the artists. They were just responding to the work. For me, that was just amazing to watch! I mean, to make something and put it out there and then realize, "Gosh! It has an impact I could have never have imagined." It's making me teary just thinking about it. Wow! That really, it's just one gesture that is touching so many different people's lives. Or my Discovery Green piece, it touches so many. I say to my students, "Who's been to Discovery Green? Who knows the red building or the blue building?" And they're like, "Oh! I do! I do!" Then I tell them that that's my work, and they're like, "Really? I love it!" And what a great honor to be able to make something that is so appreciated by, and unexpectedly appreciated, by people. That's very special.

How do you conceptualize art education?

It's complicated. I mean, as an artist, I remember when I first started teaching. It's really hard to dissect what it is that you actually know. And how to unpackage the complexity of information that goes into one thing. I think for my own self, it's like trying to create the mindset that allows people to maybe give themselves permission to delve into

FIGURE 5 *Synchronicity of Color, Red*

FIGURE 6 *Synchronicity of Color, Blue*

things they don't know.

I have beginning sculpture students now and for their final projects they're all doing really big pieces. One girl today was in tears because she cut something the wrong way and it wasn't working. It wasn't the way she wanted it. So I said, "Maybe you should do it all over again." And you could just see tears welling up. To do it a second time is actually going to be much easier. You've already done all the hard thinking. All the conceptualizing has already happened. It's just the manufacturing of something and you'll be a lot more careful next time because you know where you made the mistake. But showing people that that's okay, that's part of the process. Maybe we touched on that earlier. But I think seeing and looking at art in the flesh is so important. And physically making things is so important. I mean, it's a big, big topic. And everybody has their own facet as to how they might [teach art].

And when I look at the students that are coming in. Maybe they've worked with AutoCad or worked with things that I never knew.

There are different skill sets that everyone is coming in with and that will change how they think. I also think that in the arts someone who is just a painter or just a ceramicist or just a sculptor, I don't think that exists anymore. So how do you educate a student to embrace many aspects as opposed to just one? And I think that as a sculptor, we live in the material, physical world, but it's a knowledge that we don't honor that we actually know it. We're all very sophisticated. Even like a six year old when they come to school. They're probably more attuned to the physical world then the conceptual complexity of drawing a drawing or making a painting. Somehow in art education we fall back on that it's drawing and painting first and not the dimensional world. I would challenge for all institutions to think about that because I think we do a disservice because we are incredibly sophisticated...physically. So we choose a silk or we choose a wool or we sit on leather or we sit on chrome or we touch wood or we hold a book and we open a book. We walk through an archway, we walk upstairs, we lie on a bed, we smell flowers, we hear sounds. I mean all this, we're very sophisticated in



that arena but somehow we sweep that away and say, "that's not important., but what's important is to learn how to draw first." I believe if that physical knowledge was really embraced right from the get-go, that there would be a very different relationship to how we make work. And then to realize that, "Gosh, that is really complicated." That is conceptually profound—what we know—what our base is. And then we're going to leap in to the complexity of making a drawing that uses perspective, or we're going to make a painting that has layers of paint, or whatever. But, to acknowledge that foundation is immense because I don't think we tap into that. And most students shy away from that. It doesn't mean you have to be a sculptor, but you might become a furniture designer or you might become a web designer. And you might think about systems and structures in different ways because you've been in the wood shop cutting up pieces of wood or making frames. How we get to what we end up doing... that circuitous route is really interesting.

And maybe now, as a teacher, my biggest challenge is to make the students realize that they're the ones who are

the most critical of themselves. And self-criticism is the worst because it can annihilate. I think when you're willing to mess up and make mistakes, and pick yourself back up. I think that's when things happen and that change can happen. [That's] when you learn. I think it's allowing students to discover that it's really ok not to know. Not to have a plan. Not to have an answer or a result in mind. Sometime the failures are the best! More recently I've been telling students that we're experimenting. We're not making fully fledged works of art. First, we're sort of experimenting and trying and testing. Just seeing how



FIGURE 7 Elysian Fields

FIGURE 8 Elysian Fields, close-up

that might be. And there are Eureka moments along the way and sometimes the periphery of that community. The community of students, or the community of artists around you makes you step up your game. Or they challenge you. You might realize, "Gosh! I need to work harder!"

How might your artwork inspire new artists or art teachers?

In my own work, I'm very nerdy. So I might spend three months researching paint! Fading and who's got the best stabilization? Or like, most recently I've been looking into this thing called titanium deposition which is a way of depositing a color onto a metal or glass. It creates a beautiful, kind of inky, oily, like an oil slick. I've been on the phone to a bunch of different people. It's complicated and it's not easy. I hit a wall and then I stop. And then I'll go back and call that person again and ask, "What about this? What about that? Could you do it that way?" Another time recently I've been working with a glass company. I went to a glass conference a couple of years ago and they had a trade show [with] all these different glass manufacturers. At the trade show, there was a company called Austin Thin Films and they're based right here in Austin, Texas. Here I was at Pittsburgh at this conference! And they make this amazing glass, dichroic glass and I was like, "Can I come visit your factory?" So I went and they had these multimillion dollar chambers. Basically they put this nano film of this dichroic film onto

glass and that's what creates these beautiful colors. When I was looking in the chamber, they had all these pieces of aluminum that were deflecting the light. I was like, "Ooh! You could do it on metal!" And they were like, "No, no, no. It will never work." This aluminum-it captured the light and it took about three months for me to convince them that putting my boxes in there wouldn't disrupt their process of making things. And so they discovered something and I discovered something. Again, it was very much this circuitous research and it's still not completed, there's still kinks. Sometimes it works well. Sometimes it doesn't, but I love it when that happens! Or I might go to different powder coating places and say, "Who does the best painting? Who's the best finisher for a project that I might need?" Or I might go to the metal fabrication shop that I use. I love just going there and seeing what's happening. I'll see something and I'll be like, "Ooooh! You mean you can do that?" And then my mind starts to click. So seeing other places of making is really important.

Conclusion:

I hope that this conversation with Margo Sawyer will inspire you and your students. For more information about Margo Sawyer's work, visit <http://www.margosawyer.com/>
All photos appear courtesy of Margo Sawyer.

INTERVIEW WITH GARY SWEENEY

by Maria Leake

Introduction:

Gary Sweeney grew up in Southern California, lived in Denver, Colorado from 1982-1994, and moved to San Antonio in 1994. Gary and I first crossed paths in 2004, when he came to work with my high school art students at Fox Tech High School as a visiting artist. His sense of humor and eagerness to make art engagements fun and highly exploratory then and now, made his name come to mind when deciding which artist from San Antonio I'd like to interview for Trends. Gary is also a great choice because he lives and breathes in the contemporary art world, whether it's making art of his own (Figure 1), or attending openings of other artists. Gary also has another notable attribute that I value...honesty. When you asked Gary a question, he gives you a straight answer.

When I recently attending his forty year retrospective at the Blue Star Art Museum in San Antonio, Texas during contemporary art month, there was such energy in the air and the place was packed with visitors. Gary exhibits his work around the world and is part of many major art collections. In fact, this interview coincided with his forty year retrospective at the Blue Star Contemporary Museum in San Antonio, Texas, where this interview took place on April 9, 2013.

Background:

Are you a full time artist?

I am a full time artist. After I graduated from UC at Irvine, I just assumed that the art world was going to beat a path to my door ...but it didn't happen, so I had lots of odd jobs. I had just finished framing some houses in Venice Beach, and a surfer buddy of mine called me up and asked me if I wanted to be a baggage handler. You know, that wasn't one of the top 200 jobs I would have ever thought of having, but I didn't have a job at the time, so I became a baggage handler. So for about 12 years, it was my main source of income, if not my only source of income. Then I had a few breaks and got some public art opportunities and it sort of reversed itself to where now my baggage handling is a little more of a hobby and I'm a professional full time artist, which I'm very thankful for because it's very rare.

How did you come to be interested in the arts?

Our family was art oriented. My grandmother was a painter and my aunt had gone to art school and was a very well accomplished paper maker. Everyone in my family enjoyed the arts. We went to art museums when I was a kid. I showed an interest in art from the time I could hold a pencil. I also had an aunt who didn't have any children and she would shower me art supplies for birthdays and



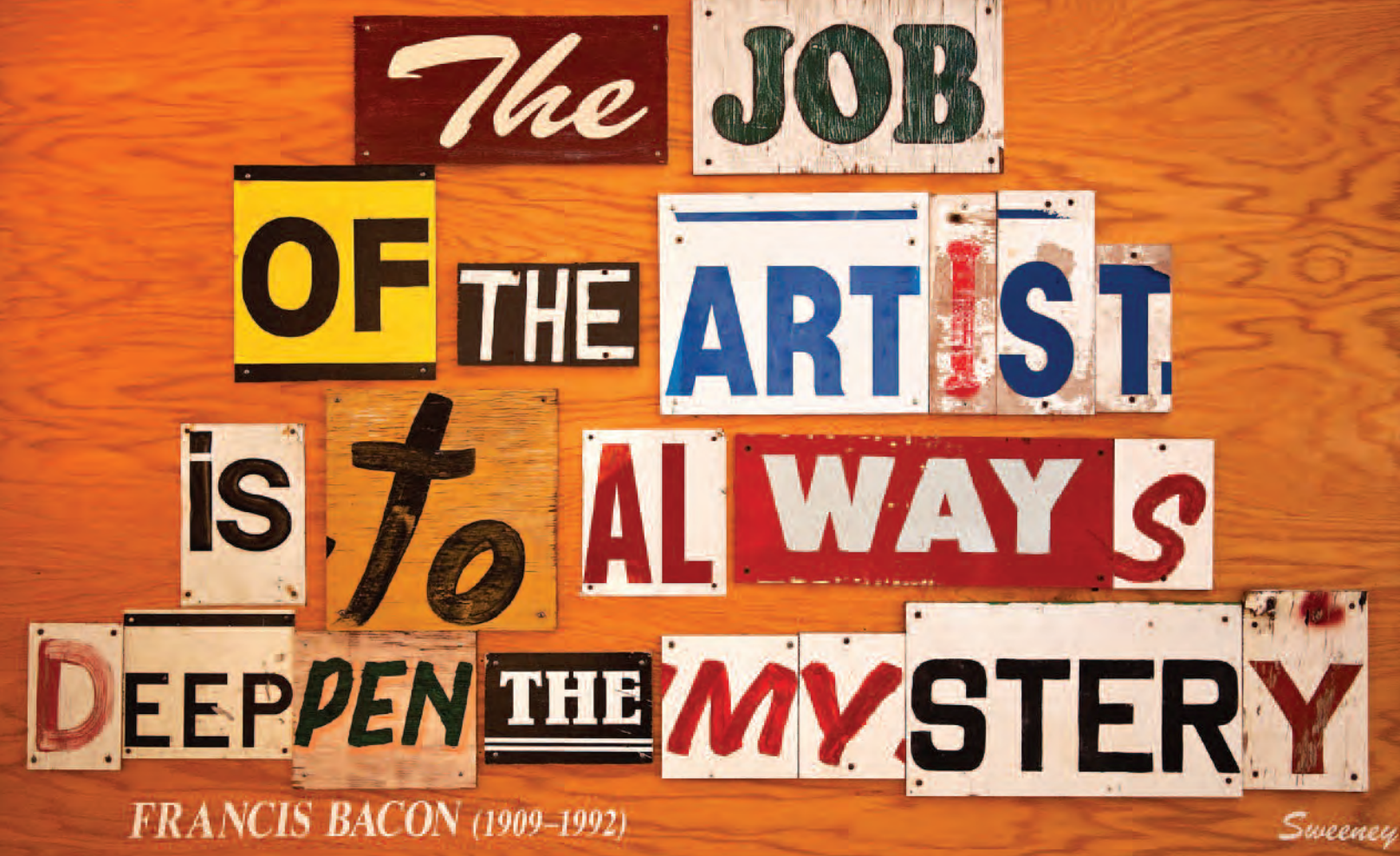


FIGURE 1 *The Job of the Artist* (1999). Discarded signs. 50" x 80".

FIGURE 2 *A Child's Dream* (2006). Postcards, paint, and vinyl. 44" x 52".

Christmas. Anyway, it was a very art friendly family that encouraged my efforts. We went to all the LA art museums. We went to the Laguna Beach Art Festival. So you know how some families are musically inclined? Ours was artistically inclined.

What memories or associations do you have with your early art experiences?

I remember being at the Laguna Art Festival when I was seven or eight years old and the artists had booths. There was an artist sitting in his director's chair in front of his drawings and paintings, this was in the early 60s I guess or late 50s, and he was drawing these figures with a pen. He was making these sort of line drawings with these squiggles and they were so cool and I remember this as if it happened ten minutes ago. I remembered looking at him and thinking, "This is magic! How cool would that be to do something like that? That is amazing just to have something like that appear out of nowhere." And I remember going to the Museum of Modern Art in New York for a family vacation in 1964 when I was twelve years old and seeing Rauschenberg's Monogram, with an angora goat stuffed through a tire and standing on a painting. And



FIGURES 3 & 4 *My Mother's Life in Six Parts* (1990). Serigraph, linocut, and photograph. 19" x 20".

there was a very famous Kienholtz sculpture, *Backseat Dodge '38*. It was very controversial because there was a couple having sex in the back of his car. Of course I didn't see it that way at all, but I remember it vividly. It was 1964 and there was a lot of Pop Art on display. There were such cool things. I just remember being blown away by that. I have a handful of very strong artistic memories, but the strongest one was of the guy drawing the figures because it really hit home that someone, that I could do something like that!

*Another very strong and early influence that Gary discussed was his grandmother, since she was the first artist role model he encountered regularly as a child. Gary described how his grandmother used to live downstairs in the family house, and she worked on her own paintings in a Modigliani style. He remembers that she always had a lot of artist and architect friends over. Gary noted that she wasn't like you imagine most grandmothers, with their lace doilies around or anything like that. Instead, Gary says she was simply amazing. The painting *A Child's Dream* (Figure 2) seems to reflect the childhood curiosity that still captures Gary's attention.*

What are the motivations that have sustained your active engagement in the arts?

I don't have to have a motivation. It's in my DNA you know? I think there is now some motivation in that I can actually make a living doing it, and I sell paintings, and I'm in museum collections and people come to see it, but you know, I would be doing that even if I never sold another piece of artwork again. Art becomes part of your life. It's something that you do, because it gives you such a charge.

Why are the arts important to you?

The arts are important to the community because they enrich your life so much. They provide such a wonderful different take on reality; I'm talking about all the arts of course. People just do these things for no functional reason. They do it because when someone else looks at it, or when they listen to it, it gives them pleasure. It's just such a part of culture, such a part of a civilized being to be well-rounded. There just isn't any other thing like it.

What are the main issues, themes or ideas in your artwork? How have these developed over time?

I jump around a lot in my art work. If I wanted to complain about something in my art, I would complain that I tend to shift gears often. But when I look at this overview of my work (pointing to the collection of art in the gallery on display), there are a lot of recognizable set of patterns that deal with humor, family, family vacations, and they deal with my youth and nostalgia. They deal with my experiences as a child in Scouts, during the Cold War, and all of those things that define me, and seem to manifest themselves in my art work. I think the underlying thread is that I try to approach it all with humor.



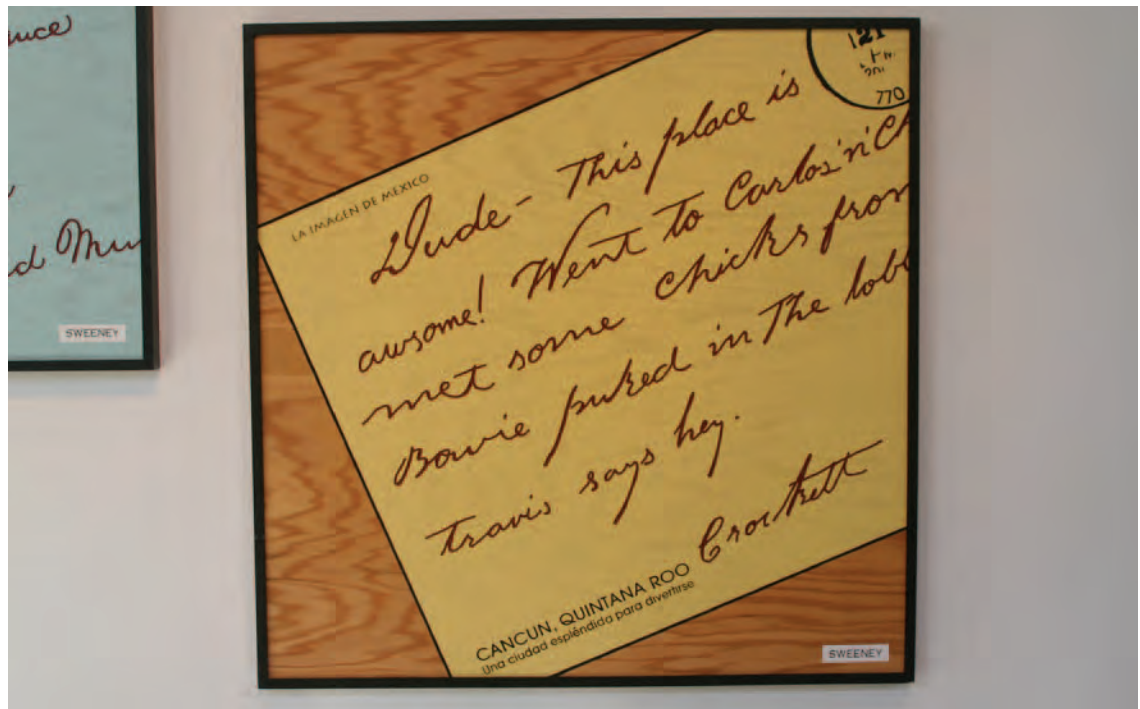


FIGURE 5 Davy Crockett's
Postcard from Cancun.

I know that people also tell me that they can identify my work immediately by the materials, the fonts I use, my color palette, but up until this show was hung, I could think of anything that really connected my work. You know I use a lot of text in my work. I work with ideas. It's conceptual. I work with material such as people writing words on grains of rice, to cups in a chain link fence, to all of these different types of new mediums that I come across. I explore kinda quirky things, such as language and how people in different countries have their version of John Doe, or how people sign their names, or how people identify with their signature. I jump around until I come across an idea that intrigues me and I try to explore it and see what I come up with....I'm still intrigued by psychopaths. I like work that people will see from a distance and as they examine it closer, it has a completely different meaning or a surprise to it.

Please share and discuss some of your art that have had the greatest personal meaning to you.

The series I did of my mother's life, of course, would be a pretty obvious one (see Figures 3 and 4). It was a series of five prints that are silkscreens, mixed media of linoleum cuts and photographs, and instead of using the usual benchmarks of your life, I wanted to do it in relation to the Los Angeles earthquakes, just to give it a little twist (laughs). Also, she was born and raised and spent her entire life living in Los Angeles. I found that she was in nursing school during the 1933 earthquake and I was born shortly after the 1952 earthquake. Then I was around for the 1971 earthquake, which was really crazy. I think it was their 25th wedding anniversary. So with these benchmarks, I wanted to make these two disparaging things connect. And then it's poignant in the fact that during the last earthquake, she was suffering from the late effects of Alzheimer's so she was bedridden and probably didn't even know it was going on (pauses). So it's a little bit bittersweet, which a lot of my work is, and I thought it was kinda a nice tribute.

Indeed, when you see the silkscreens and the collection of black and white images of his family he selected for this work, they are wonderful tributes. They remind me of so many candid everyday moments that people treasure with the passage of time.

What about some of your other favorite pieces?

Well the one with the famous people's handwriting was pretty fun to do. For instance, there was one with Georgia O'Keeffe where it has her three different signatures and I first saw her signatures, I thought they were really cool gestures you know? They looked like drawings, but it was sobering knowing she was going through dementia and her ability was depreciating, but I just liked the idea of how her signature looked. And I did one with Davy Crockett's handwriting (see Figure 5) and I did one with Abraham Lincoln's handwriting. As I was studying them, the research I did included looking at all the speeches and their really important writings and stuff. But what I thought to myself was, "They didn't just write speeches! You know, they wrote crap too. They wrote directions on how to get to your house and stuff, so I kinda liked that day to day stuff... For the one I did one on Davy Crockett, he sends a postcard from Cancun, Mexico and they (Crockett, Travis, and Bowie) are on spring break. The postcard says, "This place is awesome! Met some chicks from LA. Went to Carlos 'n Charlie's. Travis puked in the hotel lobby." You know, it said stuff like that and I transposed them onto spring break in Mexico in that piece. I was thinking... here is something like 200 years worth of killing each other [during the battle for Texas' independence from Mexico] and then 200 years later we are all flocking down to their country to see how drunk we can get. So I liked that contrast....So a lot of this is based solely on self-amusement. *(I laugh because Gary has a way of twisting history so that we all can have a little fun looking back on our past and provides an alternate reading of history.)*

Of course I did a lot of stuff on family vacations and that was really personal to me (Figure 6). I made some huge public art pieces based on a family vacation we took back in 1964, including the piece I did for the Denver airport and also one I did for California Street, but that one vacation gave me material for about at least ten years. It was just non-stop. It just flowed out of me, because it wasn't just my vacation, it was a vacation that all baby boomers took and everyone identified with getting in the car and driving around the country in the family station wagon. So that's why I think it was so popular and so engaging was because everyone my age seemed to identify with it.

How do you see your artwork and/or artistic practices as educating and engaging communities?

I think that my artwork, as much of an avant garde artist, heavy intellectual artist that I'd like to see myself as, my artwork just borders on populist, you know it involves subject matter that people can identify with and easily understand. I've had people tell me, people that don't understand modern art that wouldn't understand Frank Stella or Rauschenberg or any of those people, understand my artwork. It hits a nerve with them. It's very populist and engaging. I think the word is "Catholic" because it addresses everyone, but sometimes I wish it was a little less so, but people who don't seem to know anything about modern art do seem to understand what I'm doing.

Do you feel like your work is educating people in any capacity?

That's a tricky question because I suppose it's like introducing people to work they would otherwise never get introduced to you know? I think a lot of people are intimidated by art. It can be intimidating. It has a language of its own, but mine seems to bridge the gap and lets people know it doesn't have to be intimidating and scary, heavy, or smarty pants (laughs), you know, it can just be something simple like "Are you a psychopath?" I think it would be really cool if people saw my artwork and decided to explore the language of art, as a result of seeing my artwork.

How do you conceptualize art education?

That's a tricky one too because I do believe in a certain amount of outreach but I think the student has to meet you half-way. They have to want to learn about art and my experience is that there are students that are just starving for information about art and they just want to learn everything they can, and then there are a percentage of students that are basically wasting their time and that's discouraging. But you try to throw these things out and hope that something sparks an interest or a passion in one of those latter groups, that is indifferent to art and has never had any sort of experience with art in their family or home. But it's a very tough nut to crack because you know maybe better than me that there are a class of students and maybe there are three or four that you just want to take home with you and teach them everything, and get them to read books on it and there are others

that are never going to be interested in art. So, I don't know what the solution is, the school should certainly not cut arts funding, that's for sure, even if there are children who don't think they are interested in it at the time, there are several who might not be interested in reading, writing, or literature or anything like that at first in high school, I know I wasn't as a freshman or sophomore, but it probably wasn't until I was out of high school and was an adult, that I went back and read all of those books that I hadn't gotten anything out of before. I guess there is this element of where you plant

human beings and some of them are great, some of them are jerks (laughs), but they have this particular skill set that they can do. And also that being an artist isn't just about making one or two good pictures, anyone can do that, but it's a life-long commitment and when you are in high school and you think you are all that and you have arrived, you haven't really arrived, you really have to work because you are constantly learning and evolving, honing your craft.



FIGURE 6 Colorado-The State That Keeps Nebraska
from Running into Utah (1992). Hand tinted photo from
1950. Vinyl photo by Mike Sweeney. 46" x 60".

a seed or idea into them and later on down the road you hope that it germinates and becomes an interest.

How might your artwork inspire new artists or art teachers?

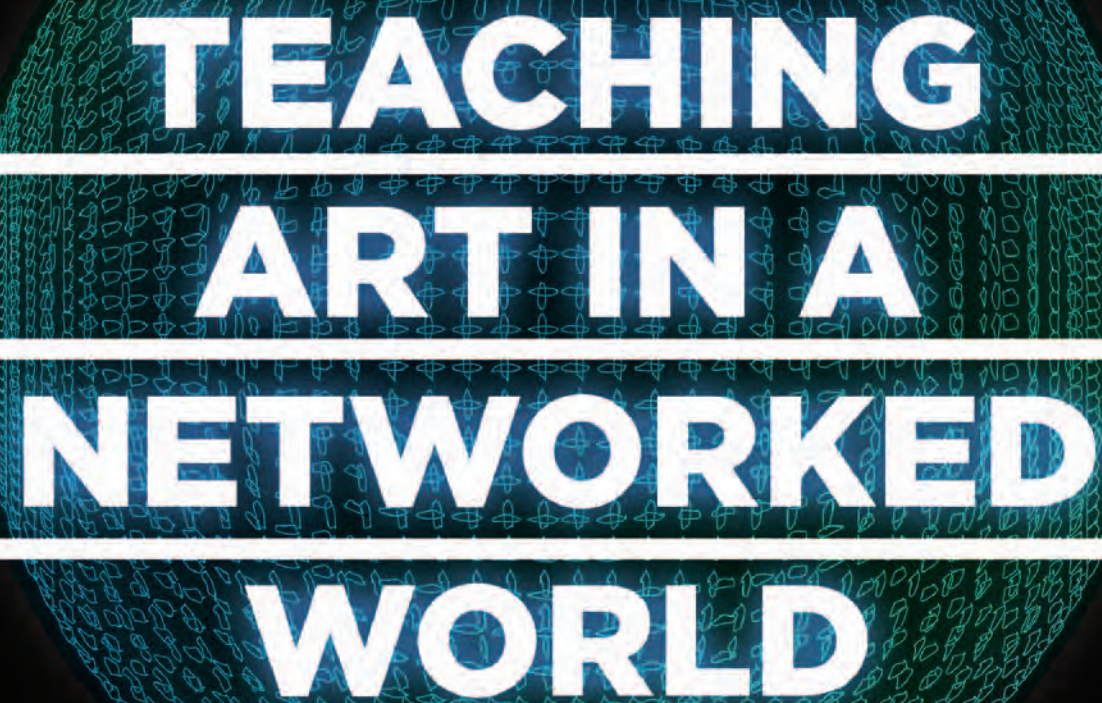
I know I had a really good art education, but I know there are a lot of students, even students that are interested in art, that rarely know an artist who has spent their entire life doing art and having success in this country or in other countries and I would hope that would inspire them to know that it can be done. You know if you don't have any role models who tell you, "Look, you can really do some good things if you exert a little bit of effort." I'm glad just to be able to show them that even what a professional artist can do with their life and I know that when I was young and I saw artists, I just thought they were the coolest people and it's just kinda funny that you just idolize them and then you find out when you are an adult that they are just

Conclusion:

Despite the fact that Gary was born and raised in California, I'm so glad he has chosen to make San Antonio his home. His art is notably present throughout our city, including at the San Antonio airport with his installation of outdoor signs poking fun at our city in a series he calls Nostalgia, Texas (see <http://www.walleyfilms.com/filter/Artist-Documentary#Gary-Sweeney-s-Nostalgia-Texas>). Gary embraces so much of what makes the San Antonio art community interesting to me; it's always pushing the envelope on new ideas and ways of engaging communities through art. Thanks Gary!



NATIONAL DISCOURSE: INVITED ARTICLE



TEACHING ART IN A NETWORKED WORLD

illustration by Jesse Mackenzie & Jacob Bloom

JUAN CARLOS CASTRO

TEACHING ART IN A NETWORKED WORLD

by Juan Carlos Castro

Keywords: Networks, Social Media, and Teaching Art

As I was traveling to Vancouver to pursue my Ph.D. in the summer of 2006, I was invited to join this new online site called Facebook by my former visual art students at Towson High, a secondary school in Maryland. My former students had started a Facebook group of people who had attended my art classes at the school. I was surprised at how many of my former students—many of whom knew each other, and many of whom did not—so readily self-organized into a community of artists mentoring each other and sharing. The group has since expanded to include current high school students, as well as university students from around the world.

As a high school art teacher, I attempted to enact a pedagogy that followed my students' interests and ideas. This meant creating the conditions for students to explore ideas that were important to their interests and experiences. When I began my Ph.D. I did not intend to study new and social media for my research; however, I was compelled to follow my former students into this new space of interaction, teaching, and learning.

Recent digital technologies are creating new forms of networked communication. These dynamic networks are reshaping the way teens know and learn about themselves and their world. Teaching and learning are now more fluid, decentralized, and emergent. As art educators, we need to consider how our students know and learn through these networks and adapt our teaching and classrooms accordingly. Given the highly visual nature of social media, art educators are poised to become educational leaders using these new technologies.

CHANGE IN QUALITY, NOT KIND

If there is a distinguishing feature of the 21st century so far it is the speed in which communication technologies have changed the way we interact. We have to be careful not to articulate these changes as in kind but rather in quality. These qualitative shifts can be described by the speed in which information moves, the ability to amplify a message or thought instantaneously, and the shift in the spatial dimensions of how we interact.

Teens used to interact with adults in public spaces and work, either in factories or the field, and it is only in the past 60 or so years have they been moved into isolated pockets of social interaction. Our architecture and zoning has shifted from commons and public spaces to an environment that is commercial and primarily accessible by automobile. This presents a challenge for teens without a license and a car. When teens are able to meet up, it is usually in spaces designed for consumption (e.g. shopping malls). Teenagers who are not shopping are often met with suspicion by mall security and the public. It should be no surprise that teens have taken to social media to foster and maintain social relationships.

Current research confirms that the majority of teens use social media to maintain established relationships in school (Ito et al., 2008). Social media in all its forms supports the social relationships of not only teens but also of many adults alike. Here are two quick statistics to frame just how pervasive social media has become in a short amount of time.

- Well over 95% of teens use the Internet (Madden, Lenhart, Duggan, Cortesi & Gasser, 2013).
- Over 80% of young adults use some form of social media (Duggan & Brenner, 2013).

This is a significant portion of teens we teach. The kinds of peer sharing and distribution of media content facilitated by social media stands in contrast to the top-down, unidirectional flow of older media like

television. Mizuko Ito (2008) and her research team defined that there are two kinds of social media activity: friendship driven and/or interest driven. Facebook¹ is a friendship driven social media platform. Where sites like DeviantArt² are interest driven. In interest driven sites, youth turn to specialized knowledge groups of both teens and adults from around the country or world with the goal of improving their craft and gaining a reputation among expert peers. In the case of DeviantArt, youth upload art related content and view other youth's art. They share expertise and know-how while also supporting each other's artistic production.

Outside of what teens are doing, social media has been credited lately with the dramatic political changes in the Middle East know as the Arab Spring,³ and Maple Spring⁴ here in Quebec. But as to the debate on whether or not social media caused these social protests⁵, social media has qualitatively changed how people organize. These changes can be summarized in the following ways.

1. The speed in which information travels is staggering. News events, research, and content can travel across the globe in seconds. Learners can access information about events and interact with others in real time. For better or for worse people can now exchange and act off of new information that can be distributed and received almost instantaneously. Information is also distributed and shared with people through their networks of associations.

2. Social media amplifies information so that more people are reached faster. In addition to being able to transmit information rapidly, social media can broadcast content to millions of people. Amplification of information is not just about reaching a vast amorphous of Internet users. It is about reaching those who you are connected with and potentially connecting with the social connections of others.

3. Social media shifts the spacial so that interactions happen across time and space. Exchanges of content and dialog do not have to occur in real time or in a real space through social media. Communication is asynchronous and open. For example, this means that individuals can have a public "conversation" on Twitter over the course of a day, and it can be seen by others from almost anywhere in the world.

The way people interact is still fundamentally the same in kind. Instead of writing letters, we send texts and post pictures on each other's Facebook pages. The speed, audience, and spacial qualities of communication have shifted. What these shifts have prompted are new understandings of how we come to know and learn from each other. The structure of these new forms of interaction can be described as networked. Art education scholars have recognized the importance of identifying and adapting our pedagogy and curriculum for a networked understanding of teaching and learning (May, 2011; Sweeny, 2008).

NETWORKS

A network is a term that can describe a number of phenomenon. Networks are both a structure and dynamic system of relationships, flows, and interactions. The precursor to the Internet, ARPANET (Leiner et al., 2000) was designed as a distributed network, one with many connections between research centers around the United States. It was designed to withstand disruptions in the communication network in times of war by rerouting information around damaged or disrupted communication centers. Networks are used in all kinds of differing fields like the study of molecular exchanges to cell phone networks.

Perhaps you have played the game Six Degrees of Kevin Bacon, where the object is to link any movie star in Hollywood to Kevin Bacon in six movies. If a movie star was in the same movie as Bacon, there would be a direct degree of separation. If an actor or actress starred in a movie with someone who starred in a movie with Bacon, then there would be

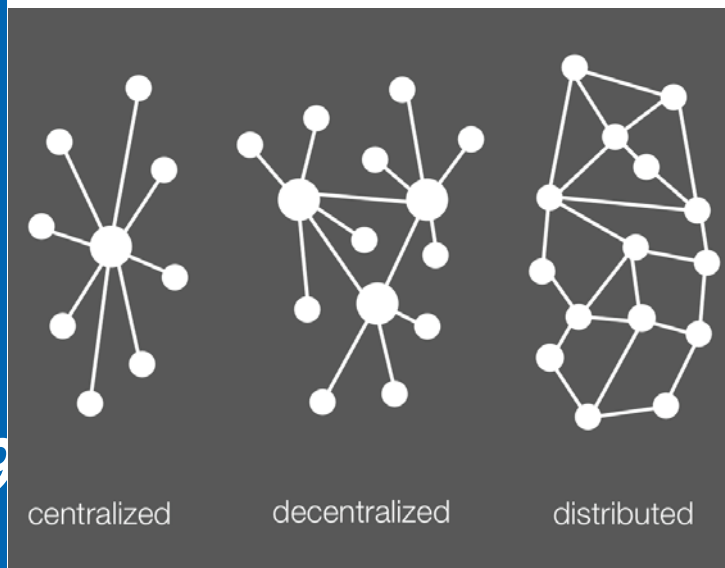


FIGURE 1 Centralized, decentralized, and distributed networks.

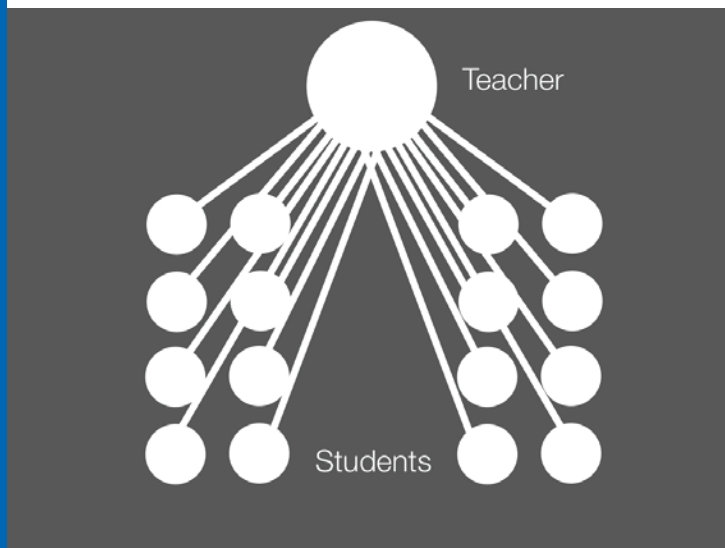


FIGURE 2 Centralized teaching model.

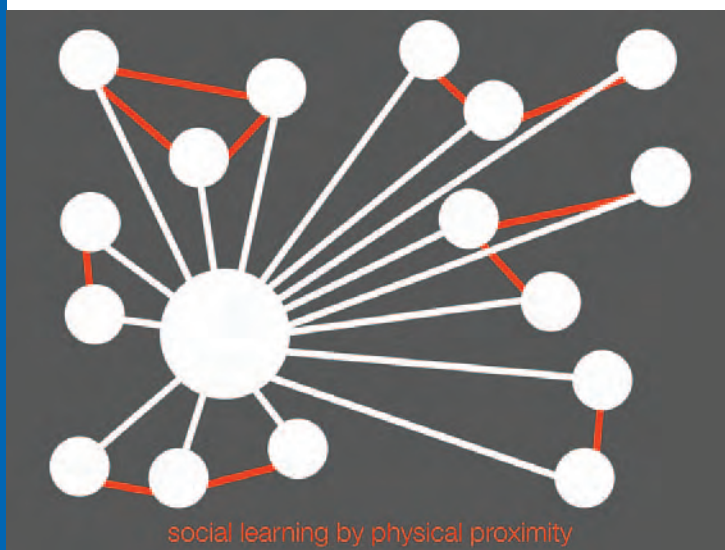


FIGURE 3 Social learning in the classroom by physical proximity.

another degree of separation. The game is based off of Stanley Migram's small-world problem. Milgram's experiment focused on the average number of social connections between any two people in the United States. The study demonstrated that the social connection between individuals averages around six people. Recent research actually puts the average steps between people at around 4 to 5 steps (Watts, 2003). There are a number of different kinds of network structures. There are three common network structures: distributed, centralized, and decentralized. Also, the number and quality of links define the characteristics of nodes and dynamics of a network.

A centralized network has many nodes, all linking to one central hub (Figure 1). This type of network architecture is very efficient and effective at communicating and distributing information. Centralized networks do not enable communication between nodes, other than through the centralized hub, which makes for inefficient communication between elements in the network. It is also much more vulnerable to breakdown if the centralized hub is removed or unable to communicate effectively.

Distributed networks have a structure that has few, if any, hubs in its architecture (Figure 1). Distributed networks are comprised of nodes that have a fairly even distribution of links between them. Its advantage is that it is very resistant to failure in communication, although it can also be very inefficient in terms of the time taken for information to make all of the jumps from one node to another. A decentralized network is one with a distributed amount of nodes, with the exception that there are a number of hubs, or nodes with proportionally more links than a majority of nodes in the network (Figure 1). Decentralized networks also have a characteristic dynamic where well-connected nodes gain more connections (links) in proportion to existing connections. What this means is that nodes, which have a lot of connections, get more connections in greater proportion to those nodes with less.

Often our pedagogical practice is organized in a way where we see ourselves as the hub for all information, knowledge, skill, and authority (Figure 2). But as we know, especially in art, there is a lot of informal social learning between students (Vygotsky & Cole, 1978). Usually this kind of looking and learning from each other is governed in relationship to previous social relations and physical proximity (Figure 3). What if we were to start to blend social media into our classrooms to create a more decentralized learning network? A network that acknowledges the social learning in an art classroom, which also incorporates social media's ability to occasion social learning across physical space and time (Figure 4). As is becoming more apparent through other's and my own research (Castro, 2012a) the textual conversations, images, and ideas that are captured through social media tools and can be accessed by all students in a learning setting has profound impact on the learning and ideation. This especially happens in art educational contexts (Figure 5). What we are finding is that teaching no longer resides solely in the teacher or even in students, but also in the images, interfaces, and ideas. Thinking of teaching and learning this way and designing our curriculum and pedagogy around it creates a much more robust system of learning--robust enough that even when the "teacher" steps out student learning is well supported (Figure 6).

LEARNING THROUGH ENCOUNTERS WITH DIFFERENCE

Media prompts a shift of our knowing in the world. When social media is used in the classroom it creates a collective memory, one that captures information, images, and ideas. These things teach. In other words, because it acts as a collective memory, social media captures dialog and

art that can be accessed on demand and at a learner's own pace. This has huge implications for learning.

In one of my recent research projects, I worked with a group of teens and art teachers making art on and offline. When I asked the students how they learned, many of them talked about how they learned by looking at their peer's images (Castro, 2012a). Teens want to look at each other's art because they care about what their peers are doing. This is hugely important to their artistic development--many times more so than looking at the work of "master" artists with whom they have little personal or social connection.

Social media amplifies this effect by enabling people to select and upload work. It is a creative reciprocal exchange of ideas. Given the proper guidelines that are constructive, participatory, and respectful, teens will rise to the occasion. Provided with the opportunity students will post a more diverse set of works of art than we could actively cultivate and select on our own as teachers. Having a diverse set of ideas, materials, and art forms within a classroom, produced by students, creates a more robust and rich learning environment. Simply put, students learn through encounters with difference (Grauer, Castro & Lin, 2012).

Learning by encountering difference has to be fundamental to what we do as art educators. It is how we can teach empathy, understanding, and creativity. When we put artworks on display, we curate a select few examples of what we think is exemplary. Often, in my research and as a teacher, I have found that students will be attracted to and learn from works that I would have never had taken interest. I am often surprised by what students select as inspiring images from their peers. What social media does is open up the possibility for a wider range of interpretive possibilities because the teacher is not filtering and curating exclusively. There is room enough for everyone to select, upload, and curate work online.

The decentralized network that can be facilitated by social media can deliver difference because a diversity of artworks are chosen and uploaded by participants. It is also dynamic in that differences are constantly being shaped and reshaped by the activity of those online. Activity through social media continually changes the network of knowledge through the addition or subtraction of images, texts, and views. These dynamics create opportunities for encounters with difference.

PROVOKING DIFFERENCE

We should not just rely on the algorithms of social media and student activity alone to deliver difference. How can our curricula also provoke difference in conjunction with social media? There needs to be pedagogical and curricular shifts to amplify these new qualities of teaching and learning enabled by and through social media. The first shift I want to address is the idea that everything we do in our classroom should provoke difference. If students learn through encountering difference, then as art educators, we should be seeking to create the conditions for divergent forms of thinking.

Constraints that enable stem from complexity and network theory (Davis & Sumara, 2006). Its premise is that we all operate and function in the world within constraints. If we did not, there would be no action nor form. Constraints like gravity, time, and resources are constraints that influence what we can and cannot do. Some can be very disabling; some constraints can open up new possibilities. Constraints can provide enough order to enable action and enough space to enable divergence. It is all about finding a sweet spot between chaos and order. It is about referencing student's distinct experiences and asking them to reconsider them, not just retell them. The qualities of the constraints and prompts,



FIGURE 4 Social learning across social media.



FIGURE 5 Social learning across social media, through and with objects.

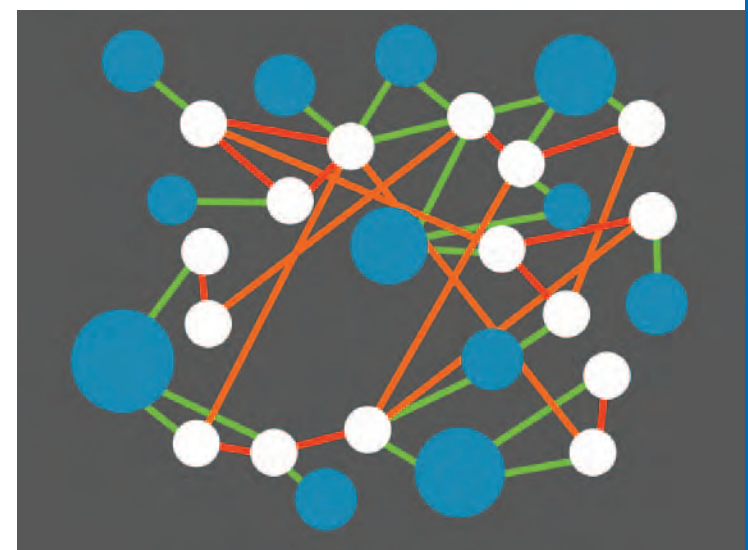


FIGURE 6 A learning network robust enough to function even without the teacher.

especially in the first phases of any curriculum need to ask participants to consider and respond to habitual ways of understanding their experiences and world. In past curricula that I have taught, I have posed questions like (Castro, 2012b):

- What image of the world would you leave for us if you were to be struck blind tomorrow?
- Create a self-portrait of yourself without showing yourself.
- Show us the “itch” you can’t scratch.

These are just a few examples. What they have in common is that they are not easily answerable, and they require the student to rethink something familiar. Constraints that enable should seek to create the conditions where students have to reconsider the familiar from their own experiences. By recognizing the value of each student’s diverse set of experiences and asking them to not only retell, but to re-imagine and reinterpret it anew, we can provoke difference.

The Collective Teaches

Through the provocation of difference in our curriculum, which can be captured and disseminated through social media, we have a unique opportunity to attend to the ideas of the collective and to leverage those ideas as things that teach. Before going any further I want to distinguish between what I mean by collectives from the word collaboration. Collectives in this context are groups of individuals who inquire into their own experiences and ideas and communicate them among the group. Think of it as a studio of artists, while collaborations work toward joint projects and shared ventures like a community mural. In social media terms, it is the difference between a Flickr group and a Wikipedia entry. The Flickr group shares a common interest in something photographic and it is made up of individual’s creative works, while a Wikipedia entry is a singular text made through discussion, deliberation, and debate.

Responding to Peers Through Art

The first example of how we can leverage how the collective teaches is asking students to respond to each other’s art through art making. It is an activity we often ask our students to do, except we ask them to copy or mimic a famous painting like Van Gogh’s *Starry Night*. In this instance I might ask my students to:

STEP # 1 - For this project you are to select one (or possibly more than one) image and create a response with your own image or video. It has to be made by someone from this site and posted to this site.

STEP #2 - Post your image or video and in the comments section paste the image or screen shot of the video you responded to.

Again, I am often surprised at what students will chose to respond to as inspiration. Often learning happens between individuals that I could have never predicted nor orchestrated.

Creating Your Own Constraints/Responding to Others’ Constraints

The second example is asking students to write their own constraints. After a certain amount of time working with questions and prompts that are constraints, I invite them to write their own constraint for their peers to respond to and then respond to someone else’s constraint. I will ask:

The first part to this project is to come up with a project for us to do and second to respond to someone else’s’ project prompt or

question. Post your images and use the prompt or question that you responded to as the title.

The advantage here is that your students will produce a wider range of opportunities for each other and it will give you, as the teacher, an idea of what they have learned thematically in your curriculum. Often the questions and prompts asked reflect what you have done in your classroom and push it further. It is a way of understanding what kinds of questions resonate with teens today. Some of the constraints my students have come up with provoked such diverse and sophisticated responses that I have used them with my other classes.

Curating Peer Artwork

The third example is one where you ask students to curate their peer’s work. Again, you need a sufficient amount of work so this is the kind of question that happens later in a curriculum when you have many images posted to a social network. Social media captures the work and ideas of a group and feeds them back into the group, and this project amplifies that dynamic and asks students to make a meta analysis about what is happening in their group. I will ask:

This week’s project is a little different in that you won’t be creating work, you’ll be organizing it by creating a thematic album. For this week you’re going to be a curator where you will organize a thematic exhibition of other participants’ art works. What patterns do you see in the work posted? What are some of the things we might have missed in our online discussions? Can you curate a series of works that relate to your own ideas? The criteria you use to organize your exhibition can be formal, conceptual, or both. When you have curated your album of work give it a title and write a description introducing the exhibition.

Of course, you do not need social media to enact any of these examples. Students can respond to each other’s art in the physical classroom. They can post constraints on a classroom wall, and they can curate each other’s art without social media. What social media does is shift the ability for students to engage with each other’s art outside the classroom, in real time, and amplified throughout. In my research (Castro, 2012a), I have found that students who might not be the most gregarious benefit immensely from the ability to study the art of their peers from a distance. It builds their confidence and ideas to engage more readily in the physical classroom.

CREATING THE CONDITIONS

Early on in my career as a high school art teacher, I realized I could not cause students to make meaningful art that was as distinct as their own experiences. No matter how well I planned or how many examples I shared, no lesson plan based off of what I was interested in would enable a place full of divergent and diverse ideas. Instead I would, as Olivia Gude (2004) observed, just have piles of exercises and visual forms that were indistinguishable from the next. This was the case in my teaching until a few friends started talking to me about what made our undergraduate art school experience so meaningful. There, we had shared a deep commitment to our own ideas and artworks, while also attending to each other’s developments, breakthroughs, and struggles. We lamented that art making got hard after we had graduated and gone our separate ways. Making art got hard because we were no longer a part of a collective of artists. We no longer had a robust network of knowing.

It was then I began trying to shape my art classroom into a space like the studio I had shared with colleagues during that period—one that would be familiar yet different in the context of school. I also started to shape my curriculum and pedagogy as a co-artist working alongside

students, asking questions about what mattered to them most and how could we look closer at their concerns through artistic inquiry. We became a collective of artists, mutually interdependent. I realized what I needed to do as a teacher was create the conditions for a decentralized learning network. And now, with social media permeating all aspects of our society we have a unique opportunity as art educators.

The language of social media is inherently visual, and images now play just as critical a role in online communication. We can be educational innovators when we teach our students how they can participate in creative, constructive, and visual ways through social media. We can structure our classrooms, both online and offline, to be places of innovation through decentralized networks that foster a diversity in ideation and form. As art educators we need to be the leaders on how to use social media in schools because we are the authorities on knowing, communicating, and learning through the visual.

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Endnotes

¹<http://www.facebook.com>

²<http://www.deviantart.com>

³<http://www.policymic.com/articles/10642/twitter-revolution-how-the-arab-spring-was-helped-by-social-media>

⁴<http://wi.mobilities.ca/quebecs-noisy-revolution-social-dramaturgies-of-the-maple-spring/>

⁵<http://www.wired.com/threatlevel/2011/12/gladwell-vs-shirky/><>



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Juan Carlos Castro is Assistant Professor of Art Education at Concordia University in Montreal. His research focuses on the dynamics and qualities of knowing, learning and teaching art through new and social media as understood through complexity thinking and network theory. His current research examines how mobile media coupled with creative production networks knowledge in urban environments to create educational and civic engagement with teens and young adults.

Prior to joining the faculty at Concordia University, Juan has taught at the University of Illinois, University of British Columbia, Johns Hopkins University, Maryland Institute College of Art, and the Burren College of Art. Juan is a National Board Certified Teacher and taught at Towson High School in Maryland. As a high school teacher, Castro’s teaching and curriculum was awarded a Coca-Cola Foundation Distinguished Teacher in the Arts from the National Foundation for the Advancement in the Arts and twice awarded with a U.S. Presidential Scholars Teacher Recognition Award.

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